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PAST AND PRESENT

OF

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William Paul D. D.

PAST AND PRESENT

OF

ABERDEENSHIRE,

OR

REMINISCENCES OF SEVENTY YEARS.

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM PAUL, D.D.

MINISTER OF BANCHORY-DEVENICK.

SECOND EDITION.

LEWIS SMITH & SON,

ABERDEEN.

1881.

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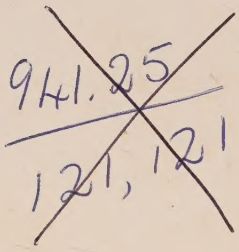

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

DURING my long life, which extends from one of the earliest years of this century, and of which fifty-five years have been spent in my present parish, great changes have taken place in my native district of Aberdeenshire. These changes have been effected mainly by the spread among all classes of the people of an education in the University, and in the Grammar and parish schools, far superior in its intellectual quality to that of past days; and by the opening up of free communication with the rest of the world, first of all, by the formation of turnpike roads, and afterwards, in a much greater degree, by the construction of railways; and they manifest themselves not only in the altered manners and customs and even language of the people, but also in the more highly cultivated and beautified aspect of the country, arising from the

extensive planting of suitable timber, the reclamation of waste land, the laying out of the arable ground in regular fields, and the improved methods of cultivation now in general use. Seventy years ago the arable portions of the country were wretchedly cultivated, ill laid out, and in many places full of earth-fast stones, and the dwellings of the farmers and their sub-tenants and dependants were of the poorest description and wanting in what are now considered the decencies of life. But the most marked feature in the face of the country was the wide extent of barren ground, consisting partly of moor land, upon which the tenants of the adjoining farms had the privilege of putting out their cattle to pick up a scanty subsistence, and partly of moss land, where they dug fuel for home consumption or for sale in Aberdeen.

The habits of the people and their manners and customs are also greatly altered. Their primitive simplicity and quaint modes of expression have almost disappeared, and numerous words, which

within my memory were in common use, are now never heard and would not be understood, although many of them have fortunately been preserved in the pages of the inimitable "Johnny Gibb." Much was said and done in former days, both by the clergy and laity, which may now seem to have betokened a great want of reverence for sacred things; but it must be remembered that they lived in ruder times, and therefore should not be measured according to the standard of these more refined days. I believe the piety of former generations to have been as sincere, and their religion and worship to have been as much from the heart, as those of their descendants.

I have been all my life blest with good health and a robust frame, which have enabled me to go in and out among the people of this parish for a period which exceeds the lifetime of many men who now consider themselves to be approaching old age. I have been an attentive observer of the changes going on around me, and it has occured to me that

a short, and even imperfect, record of these observations might be acceptable to my friends and the public. Some of the illustrative anecdotes refer to times slightly antecedent to my own. These were, for the most part, told to me by my father and mother, and I think it will be acknowledged that they are, upon the whole, apt and appropriate for the purpose.

W. P.

Manse of Banchory-Devenick,
August, 1881.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

The First Edition having been received by the public with a favour much beyond my expectation, and being out of print, I have ventured to allow a Second Edition to be issued. It is longer than the former by twenty-eight pages; and I have endeavoured to arrange the new matter, as much as possible, under the appropriate divisions or chapters of the First Edition. It is not easy, at my time of life, to gather from contemporaries additional facts as to the manners and customs of days now long gone past, and the time at my disposal for that purpose since the publication of the First Edition has been short. I can, therefore, only hope that the additions I have made will not be considered to detract from any slight merit which generous critics have been good enough to say my little work possessed.

W. P.

Manse of Banchory-Devenick,
November, 1881.

PAST AND PRESENT

OF ABERDEENSHIRE.

PAST AND PRESENT OF ABERDEENSHIRE.

THE following little Work was originally suggested by a passage in the Introduction to one of the Editions of Dean Ramsay's Reminiscences, in which he says, "I have recorded the following Remarks, by way of experiment, hoping that it might form a precedent or example for others to take up the question of changes amongst us, and state the result of their observation." I have found that he who follows the Reverend Dean must do so at a great distance, and by a different route. To say nothing of his advanced age, which carried him back into bygone times, his profession and position in society brought him into contact with the Nobility and Gentry at a period far different from the present, while his acute observation and keen sense of the ludicrous, his strong Scottish predilections, warmth of heart, and geniality of manners, peculiarly fitted him for collecting and recording his reminiscences of Scottish life and character.

He had, moreover, advantages, particularly in the later editions of his work, which none of his followers

can possess to the same extent, in that, as he himself says, he was supplied with illustrations of the habits and manners described by him in the form of anecdotes from Scotchmen in all parts of the world. By this means, his work in its later editions was greatly enriched, and that of any follower in his wake was impoverished in like proportion. It may indeed be said that the best Scottish sayings and anecdotes, which had been floating about the country for ages, became, as it were, stereotyped as his property. Yet notwithstanding, there is still some unoccupied ground for others, of which I shall avail myself—not by writing a collection of anecdotes, but by illustrating the manners, habits, and customs of a past generation in contrast with those of the present.

Dean Ramsay says that amusement is not the chief object of his work, and his readers have been much indebted for the information and benefit conferred upon them; but there cannot be a doubt that the amusement provided has not been less appreciated or less beneficial than the information furnished them. We know from high authority that there is a time to laugh, as well as a time to weep, and that "a merry heart does good like a medicine." We know that laughter excited upon suitable occasions, by pure and harmless humour, is a relief to an overburdened mind and heart, and is actually a medicine, and a very effectual one, when others fail. A kind and merciful God has opened up many sources of happiness in our path through life, as cords of love

to bind us to Himself, and has furnished us with a faculty denied to the inferior animals expressive of our enjoyment. Smiles and laughter heighten the beauty of the human countenance, especially when expressive of the enjoyment of a pure and happy heart. Accordingly, the good Dean thought that he was not acting a part unsuitable to his holy profession when, by exciting the mirth, he heightened the joys, and alleviated the sorrows of his readers. Few of the clergy in this country, of any denomination, can, with a good grace, throw a stone at the Dean for publishing his reminiscences of Scottish life and character, as he has acknowledged his obligations to them for the greater number of those published by him. To myself they have been a great source of amusement, as well as to the friends to whom I have related them. One of my neighbours, when I told him any one of them which particularly pleased him, used to say, "Oh, Doctor, that's a most beautiful *antidote*."

Dean Ramsay has delineated, in a very correct and graphic way, the general peculiarities of life and character, which distinguish the inhabitants of the "land of Cakes" from those of the "land of Roast Beef." There are, however, distinctive peculiarities by which certain counties of Scotland are sharply marked out, such as climate and soil, hill and glen, and the energy, intelligence, dialect, manners and customs of the inhabitants. Of these, Aberdeenshire deserves prominent notice, and there are reminiscences of past times of that county, which the

Aberdonians would not wish to pass away; and it is to be hoped that they will welcome the efforts of a chronicler, recording reminiscences of the past still lingering in the memories of the aged inhabitants of the county. Many of the habits and usages, and much of the language of the people, have now become of the things that are past. The young of the present day, especially the children of the upper class, do not understand many of the words which were continually in the mouths of their fathers and grandfathers. The facilities of intercourse with other parts of the country and other parts of the world, educational advantages, and the extension of general information by means of the public press, now accessible to all classes of the community, have contributed, with other causes, to the effecting of great changes in the language, intelligence, and general condition of the people. The same causes have led to the disappearance of notions and customs formerly prevalent, relics of ages of ignorance and superstition. Some of these notions and customs, however, were prevalent not very long ago. A neighbour of mine, some years ago, met a boy with a spade in one hand, and a piece of cloth, with something rolled up in it, in the other, and said to him, "Whaur are ye gauin', Jock?" To which Jock replied, "I'm gauin' to the kirkyard to bury my thoom." On another occasion, at a funeral in the churchyard of this parish, a small deal box, firmly nailed, which had been thrown up with the mould of the grave, attracted the attention of those

present, who could not imagine what it contained. The chief mourner, on seeing their perplexity, gave it a kick with the point of his shoe, and said "That's my fader's fit."

Nothing, half a century ago, used to be more striking and amusing to our countrymen in the south and west of Scotland than the peculiarities of the Aberdeenshire dialect. From this circumstance they fancied, till they knew us better, that ours was a semi-barbarous dialect, and that we, as compared with themselves, were a semi-barbarous people. Accordingly when, many years ago, any of us visited Edinburgh, no sooner did we open our mouths to ask a question of a stranger, than he stared at us before answering, saying, "You'll be frae Aeberdeen awa?" We on our part did not fail to observe peculiarities also in the Edinburgh dialect equally striking to us; and, after all, it is just a matter of taste whether it is preferable to say—"fa' tu" or "fa' tee" for fall to, "mune" or "meen" for moon, "spune" or "speen" for spoon. The late Dr. Gillan, Minister of Inchinnan, on his return from a visit to Aberdeen, many years ago, jocularly remarked to his friends, on their asking how he had enjoyed his visit and how he had been treated by the Aberdonians, "The barbarians showed me no little kindness." It is true that our dialect is different from that of all the counties to the south of us. It is also true that difference of dialect is an indication of difference of habits and character. The language of a people is influenced by climate, innate

vigour, mode of life, difficulty or ease in providing for life's comforts and wants, and isolation from, or intercourse with strangers. The same causes influence the manners, habits, and energy of the people in different districts of the same country. This fact is strikingly illustrated in the case of the nations of ancient Greece, where the broad and hard sounds of the Doric dialect indicated the northern origin and energy of the Doric race, and the comparative vigour of the highland district of Thessaly originally occupied by them, as contrasted with the soft and gliding vowel combinations of the polished and comparatively effeminate Ionians, who inhabited the fertile and relaxing country of Ionia, in Asia Minor. In like manner a connection may be traced between the hard and vigorous dialect of the Aberdonians, and their pithy and vigorous character. And it may be seen how soil and climate, which yield the fruits of the earth only after the application of great skill and industry, influence the habits and energy of a naturally vigorous and industrious population. Many parts of the Aberdeenshire of half a century ago could scarcely be recognised now but by their grand features of river and mountain. In my own parish, during that period, immense tracts of barren land and extensive mosses, from which the town of Aberdeen was supplied for centuries with peats and other fuel, have been reclaimed, through the spirit and energy of both proprietors and tenants, and by means of newly invented agricultural implements, and are cultivated by new and improved systems of

husbandry. The mosses which, but a comparatively few years ago, presented a bleak and dreary aspect now bear, in autumn, rich crops of waving corn and other agricultural productions in their seasons; and the same change has taken place in the waste and rugged moors which formerly afforded such a dismal prospect to the traveller on the public road between Aberdeen and Stonehaven.

By means of the educational institutions of the district, great changes have taken place in regard to the intelligence and character of the people. The University of Aberdeen copes successfully with the best institutions of the kind in Scotland, and sends out men, even from the humbler spheres of life, who take a fair share of the highest honours and rewards open, in the kingdom, for competitive trial; men who at one time had as little prospect of taking on a polish as the granite from their native quarries had, till the days of the ingenious and enterprising Mr. Macdonald of Aberdeen. I fear I have said too much about the Aberdonians in deprecation of any lurking prejudices that may still exist against them; I have done so out of an allowable partiality which I cherish towards them, akin to what a fond parent cherishes towards his own children, and, like partial parents, I am sensible that I have spoken too much about them, for which I hope to be forgiven. My readers, however, will hear them much spoken of, not alone on account of their educational distinctions; they will hear much of them in the Smithfield, Leadenhall, and other famous butcher markets

of London. I remember when poor wretched cattle, driven up from Scotland and worn out by their long and wearisome journey, were put to the rich pastures of England to be fed off before they could be shown in the London and other English meat markets. But now, at the Lord Mayor's and other London dinners, it is not the roast beef of old England, but the roast beef of Aberdeenshire that is extolled. Within my memory a great portion of the lower orders, especially in country parishes, did not eat butchers' meat from one year's end to the other. It is now very different; and, it must be confessed, the lower orders "have lost a great deal of their relish for brose."

The sketches to be given of the manners, habits, and condition of the Aberdeenshire folks will be very slight, my object being to amuse and instruct without wearying my readers; and my desire that the mirth of heart produced may do them good like a medicine, that my sketches may be welcome to them in the time to laugh, that they may do good to some and harm to none.

State of Religion.

During the latter part of the preceding and the earlier part of the present century the clergy of Aberdeenshire and of the adjoining counties were exemplary in their lives, and in the discharge of their clerical duties, and were, as a body, respected by their parishioners. In addition to their ordinary pastoral visits to their parishioners in health and in

sickness and affliction, they counselled and aided them in all their straits and trials. There being considerable difficulty of access in those times either to medical or legal practitioners, medicines were frequently kept at the manse for those who could not procure them elsewhere, and the minister generally made his parishioners' Wills, and settled differences arising between them. For many years my predecessor vaccinated all the children of the parish, thereby ridding it of the terrible scourge which disfigured or swept off multitudes of the children in it. All these kindly offices of the clergy gave them a great hold upon the people's hearts, and great influence over them as religious teachers and advisers. Fifty years ago the people in the country districts were as punctual as they are now in their attendance on public ordinances; and, with much inferior educational advantages to those at present enjoyed, and less precise acquaintance with the Christian system, they had probably as strong a sense of religious obligation, and were as exemplary in their conduct, as their children of the present day. The strength of the religious principles and feelings of the people, at that time, both in town and country, could not be ascertained by the interest taken by them in mission work, or by the amount subscribed for such religious and benevolent objects as those which engross so much attention and are so liberally supported in the present day. The comparative smallness of the population of Scotland fifty or sixty years ago, and of the number of emigrants to our colonies abroad;

the difficulties and expense of intercourse at that period with our colonial possessions; distractions from works of Christian philanthropy, occasioned by the wars and rumours of wars during the latter part of the past, and the earlier part of the present century, in this and other countries with which we were connected; and the comparative poverty, at that time, of the classes who are now able and willing to support such objects with bounteous hand, were obstacles to their commencement and furtherance. And, even after these obstacles were removed, it was some time before the popular mind could be educated for a work so strange to it, and aroused to engage in it with the necessary zeal and energy. It required time to stir the Christian people to the gigantic missionary and benevolent efforts of the present day, and to induce them to bestow the time, trouble, and money necessary to their success. The very idea of what is now doing for the advancement of religious objects would have seemed to our forefathers to be but a devout imagination. The heart of our country, through the action of our own and other churches, has been stirred not only to devise but to do those liberal things, under the promptings of a faith capable almost of removing mountains.

At the commencement of the present century, and for nearly thirty years onwards, the greater part of the clergy of Aberdeenshire and the neighbouring counties belonged to the "moderate party," in contradistinction to what was called the "evangelical" party of the church, who stigmatized the policy

which prevailed in the councils of the church in regard to popular claims as the "heartless domination of moderatism." The moderates were moreover charged by their opponents with preaching morality without a sufficient basis of gospel doctrine; while they in their turn charged the other party with confining their preaching to doctrine without reference to its bearings on moral obligation. The charges on both sides were not without foundation, but they were greatly exaggerated, and the party spirit and mutual dislike which existed somewhat resembled that which existed in Our Lord's times between the Jews and Samaritans. In process of time, however, the differences referred to, as regarded the work of the pulpit, became greatly narrowed, and the grand question which stirred and divided the two parties came to be the limitation or abolition of patronage, which terminated, after a bitter contest of ten years' duration, in the ever-to-be-lamented secession from the established church, with its sad consequences to the ministers who made the sacrifices required of them for conscience sake.

In my early days family worship was in this quarter much neglected, even among the clergy; among the laity it was seldom heard of, and those of them who did discharge the duty were frequently too profuse in self-laudation and in their contempt of others, who, in their turn, were not slow to speak disparagingly of them. It is very different now; the importance and obligation of the duty are generally recognised and felt; and the excellent

manuals of family prayers, now accessible to all, have removed difficulties which many of the laity felt in the discharging of this most important duty, the neglect of which, in respectable families, is now the exception, and not, as formerly, the rule. The duty is now performed without parade or ostentation, without gloom or sadness of countenance; and its fruits appear only in the purity of heart and life of the worshippers.

Within my recollection many of the gentlemen in Aberdeen, as is stated by Dean Ramsay to have been the case in Edinburgh, were very irregular in their attendance on the usual ordinances of religion in the sanctuary. What were called the genteel congregations of Aberdeen were principally frequented by ladies, and had the Rev. Sydney Smith at that time been preaching there, as he was in Edinburgh, he might have had equal reason to preach from the text—"O that *men* would praise the Lord."

Mr. Cordiner, a former minister of St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel in Aberdeen, a man of a peculiarly meek and charitable spirit, stated in a funeral sermon, preached on the death of one of the male members of his congregation, in palliation of his neglect of attendance on ordinances, "Although he did not honour us often with his presence, yet his heart was always with us."

What has been said as to the non-attendance of the gentlemen of Aberdeen on the ordinances of religion is now, I am glad to say, but a reminiscence.

As a body they are, and have been for a long time past, exemplary in the discharge of all their religious duties ; and it is generally acknowledged that the ladies, as wives and mothers, were very instrumental in winning them over by their godly conversation.

Church Discipline.

The Church of Scotland from the period of the Reformation has exercised discipline over her ministers, elders, and people. It was considered indispensable that means should be provided for maintaining purity of life and soundness of doctrine in ministers, and for the prevention and punishment of such sins and scandals in the people as were not punishable by civil authority. For these purposes a form of process was drawn up to secure uniformity of proceeding in the exercise of discipline throughout the Church, there being previously no written form in use. With a view to the more rigid exercise of superintendence over ministers, presbyteries were enjoined to hold what were called parochial visitations annually throughout their bounds. On these occasions each minister was put upon his trial, and questions were asked of him, some of which were of a vexatious, inquisitorial, and, as it seems to us now-a-days, very absurd kind. In addition to these, questions were put to the elders and people such as, generally—" Whether they had any fault to find with the minister's life, doctrine, and manner of discharging his pastoral duties ;"

and, specially and particularly—Is the minister a haunter of ale-houses and taverns?

Is he a dancer, carder, or dicer?

Is he proud or vainglorious?

Is he greedy, worldly, or an usurer? Is he contentious, a brawler, fighter, or striker? Useth he to say, BEFORE GOD IT IS SO; or, in his common conference, I PROTEST? or I PROTEST BEFORE GOD? or, says he, LORD WHAT IS THAT? all which are more than YEA and NAY. Saw ye him ever drink healths? (See Steuart of Pardovan's Collections, Book I., Title xiii. 6, where there are pages of questions put in regard to the minister's character and work). The answers given to these questions formed materials for admonition, rebuke, or libel; but the danger arising to ministers from such inquisitorial proceedings was lessened by the fact that every minister within the presbytery's bounds was himself subjected to the same sifting process. If the presbytery was not satisfied, a libel was raised, often upon very frivolous grounds, which gave the proceedings something of the character of a prosecution.

The following libel which was founded on what transpired at a presbyterial visitation of the parish of Peterculter, within the bounds of the Presbytery of Aberdeen, may be taken as a specimen: Libel presented before the Presbytery of Aberdeen contra Mr. Alex. Thomson, minister at Peterculter.

Primo. Mr. Alexander Thomson is guilty of scandalous churlishness and inhospitality, noticed by the Synod in anno 1698; evidence, by hiding

himself when he saw some strangers coming to his house, as was then publicly reported ; and since that time he hath given further evidence of it, by refusing entertainment and lodging even to such of his acquaintances as craved it of him, and thereby exposed them to several inconveniences, particularly to Mr. William Carnegie, who, having preached at Drumoak on a Sabbath-day in winter last, came to the said Mr. Thomson's house expecting entertainment and lodging, it being late, and the night very stormy and cold, yet he carried so inhumanely towards him that he was obliged to take some meat for his refreshment at the schoolmaster's house, and afterwards to ride six miles to Aberdeen ; and to Mr. Alexander Shank, another preacher of the gospel, who offered to preach for him on the Lord's day (Mr. Thomson then being bed-rid by reason of a wrest in his ankle, and the people had wanted preaching for several Sabbaths), but he refused to entertain the said Mr. Shank ; also two honest poor women in Aberdeen, viz., Janet Meldrum and Christian Smith, coming to his house towards night, as they were going to the communion at Upper Banchory, and expecting lodging there upon the account of long acquaintance and several kindnesses they had done to him, he refused to see them or speak to them, wherefore they were obliged to travel a good way off, though both of them were very infirm and weary.

Secundo. He is of a most niggardly and parsimonious humour, in so much that, though he hath

enjoyed a good benefice, and got great prices for his victuall in the late years of dearth, yet he utterly neglected to provide himself of a competent library, for which he was rebuked by the presbytery at the visitation of his kirk, 15th May, 1700 ; and, notwithstanding the said rebuke, he continued his said neglect, as appears by the inventar of his books, taken in October thereafter by appointment of the presbytery, and though he promised amendment, yet he had no addition thereto, for which he was rebuked at the Privy Censures at the presbytery on September 30th, 1701, after which he hath bought only Pool's Annotations, Turretin's Elencticks, and Flavell's Works, and is not ashamed that the presbytery forced him to buy them ; and by his not employing any skilled chirurgeon for curing his leg, for saving expenses.

Quarto. He is guilty of the unchristian neglect of the worship of God in his family, particularly since he got that trouble in his leg, sometimes having not so much as prayer in his family from one Sabbath to another ; witnesses Andrew Ross and his other servants, and owned by himself to some of the ministers of the presbytery, pretending that his leg was to be dressed at the time when he should have had family worship.

Quinto. He is guilty of laziness, sloath, idleness, and unconcernedness in his ministerial work, to the dishonour of God, and the disgrace of the ministerie, as appeareth by his lying in bed till eleven or twelve of the clock, when in perfect health, and by his

neglect to preach in his house on the Sabbath for many weeks together, since the time he got the wrest in his ankle, and even when of late he made some fashion of preaching, yet he did not rise out of his bed, which is in a room which cannot contain above twenty or thirty persons; and, when he baptised children, he would not so much as get up in his bed, but the child behoved to be laid on ane cod (pillow) before him, while he administrat that sacrament. And being one night at Crathis, and desired to pray in the family, they complained that it was rather a mockery than prayer, for they were not well got to their knees till he ended, having uttered a few sentences; and by his unedifying discourses, particularly, in preaching on Luke ch. viii. v.v. 22, 23, or a paralelle place, he showed only what good or evil the wind did to earthly things, in breaking down people's corns, biggings, and other like effects of it, but spake nothing that was spiritually edifying, which occasioned severalls to go away laughing, calling it the "windy preaching" to this day. And, upon occasion of King William's death, he preached eight or nine sermons to no edification, frequently repeating these words, "The King is dead," so that the people reckoned their time and pains lost.

Nono. He is guilty of superstitious observances, of frets and omens, saying he knew that some evil would befall him that day that he fell and hurt his leg, for his right foot shoe would not go on, and he was going to burn it; that he went out without his hat, and saw a black man in the sun; that his dog

would not follow him; that he met a barefooted child.

It appears from the Presbytery Records that Mr. Thomson was at variance with the Laird of Culter, his patron and principal heritor; and, likewise, that his parishioners were not well affected towards him. The presbytery made the most of the charges preferred against him, and did their utmost to get rid of him. Some time afterwards he was deposed, and, in consequence of his preaching after his deposition, the presbytery resolved to excommunicate him, but I cannot find that the sentence was carried into effect.

Parochial visitations by presbyteries have fallen into desuetude, except in the case of the existence of any flagrant scandal against a minister, and then the investigation is confined to the subject of the scandal. For a long time a very rigid discipline was administered in the case of parishioners for many acts now not noticed; and, for more flagrant sins, the offenders were summoned before the kirk session and punished—the females by having to sit on what was called the "cutty stool," it might be for a number of successive Sabbaths, and to be publicly rebuked in presence of the congregation, and the males by having to stand in what was called the *jougs*, which was a collar of iron attached to a post in the church or at the church door, into which the culprit's neck was inserted. I once saw one of these instruments in the old church of Forbes, in the presbytery of Alford; and there was one in the

old church of Nigg within my memory. These public appearances are no longer required, and I cannot help thinking that such a mode of administering discipline in those times had a tendency rather to harden than to edify and reform the offenders. An old simple-minded man in this neighbourhood, many years ago, gave me his notion as to the manner in which Church discipline should be proceeded with, which appeared to me to be very sensible. "They should be very sharply dealt with "if they are obstinate, but, if they are humble and "penitent, they should be treated with gentleness, "for," said he, "we are all weak creatures, and are "liable to sin; and you know that Rahab, spoken "of in the Bible, made a bad beginning, but she had "a fine out-turn,—she had a fine out-turn, she "married Salmon."

The old session records contain little else than processes of discipline. The following is a sample of the effect of such discipline upon an offender, which is taken from the Session Records of Fetteresso, of date 1748—"William Duncan, Baulk, who had been most contumacious, appears and offers to stand a rebuke and pay four pounds scots if the session will take his wife from him; being threatened with excommunication by the minister, replied, 'What care I? The Pope of Rome excommunicates you every year, an' what the waur are ye o' that?'" It appears by the following minute of session that his case was referred to the presbytery of the bounds—"William Duncan declares, being ordered by the

presbytery to submit to the session, that he knew nothing that he had done amiss, yet would they permit him to have word about with the moderator he would appear in the public place of repentance every Sabbath throughout the year."

Clerical Brethren.

Dr. George Morison, my predecessor in this parish, was son of James Morison, who was Provost of Aberdeen at the time of the Rebellion in 1745, and grandson of George Morison, who in his time had also been Provost of Aberdeen. The following is an extract from the records of the Town Council regarding his father and grandfather :—

"Mr. George Morison, Senior, was Provost during the years one thousand seven hundred and thirty and one thousand seven hundred and thirty-one. He was admitted into the Council in one thousand seven hundred and thirteen, when he was elected Baillie, and continued in that capacity, with the exception of one or two years, until elected Provost. James Morison, his son, was Provost in the years 1744 and 1745. When the rebels took possession of the town, Provost Morison was hunted out of his house by the insurgents, marched along the streets amidst a guard of bayonets and drawn swords, and forced to mount the top of the Market Cross, where he was ordered to drink wine to the Pretender's health. The Provost, ever staunch to the House of Brunswick, refusing to do so, had the wine poured down his throat." The account of this matter given

by the Provost himself, in a letter sent by him to President Forbes of Culloden, which is found in the Culloden Papers, is somewhat different, and is as follows :—

"I am just now at some distance from Aberdeen and from my family, not thinking myself safe to be in the way of those who had used me in so unreasonable odd a manner, as was my fate on the twenty-fifth past (Sept. 1745), when, being seized upon by an armed party of Highlandmen, I was violently forced down to the Cross, and there, with some broad swords over my head, was obliged to stand till their proclamation was read ; and, because I refused to drink a health they proposed, I had a glass of wine spilt down my breast, which was, I acknowledge, making me suffer in a way, next taking my life, that none could have affected me more." In reply, the Lord President says—"The useless insolent usage you met with at your Cross, and your resolute behaviour, I had formerly heard, and sufficiently approved of ; nor need you doubt it shall be properly represented in due time."

The Provost seems to have had the same determination in ruling his family as in resisting the enemies of his country. He used to teach them the Shorter Catechism on the Sunday evenings, and his son George, who was at the time too young to take part in the exercise, used to tell that, while the teaching was being proceeded with, apples were being coddled before the fire as part of the Sunday evening's meal, and that, "when my Father was

"scolding, and sometimes laying on hands on the "others, I amused myself watching the coddling of "the apples."

Dr. Morison was originally minister of Oyne, in the Presbytery of Garioch, where he was settled in the year 1782, and was translated in 1785 to the parish of Banchory-Devenick, in the Presbytery of Aberdeen, situated partly in the county of Kincardine, and partly in that of Aberdeen, the parish being intersected by the river Dee. He was a man of bland and courteous manners, and of a large and benevolent heart. He was, moreover, possessed of a sound understanding, and good business habits, and was most attentive to all the duties of his office, and much attached to his people.

During the latter period of his ministry he inherited a good fortune, which enabled him to do what few of his profession could, and what fewer probably would do if they had the means. He erected a school, with a schoolmaster's house attached to it, entirely with his own means, at Portlethen, a remote district in his own parish containing nearly 1800 souls. He erected and partially endowed two other schools to supply educational wants in the northern districts of the parishes of Fetteresso and Fintray, where his lands of Elsick and Disblair were situated. To teachers and scholars in these schools a great amount of good was done by their beneficent founder; but all the good thus effected was small compared with the benefit conferred upon his parishioners by the intro-

duction of vaccination into the parish. This he was enabled to effect through the advice and directions of his brother, then a physician in London, at a time when it was scarcely known elsewhere. There were at first great prejudices in the parish against it. Some thought it was a sinful attempt to thwart an appointment of God's providence sent in the way of chastisement; and it, no doubt, often failed at the outset by unskilfulness in the performance of the operation, improper treatment after it, and bad matter. In order to secure success, as far as possible, Dr. Morison took the whole work upon himself. He was, in testimony of his success, furnished with the following pleasing evidence. At the time of the introduction of vaccination, and from time immemorial previously, the young men of the fishing villages in the parish, viz., Findon, Portlethen, and Dounies, never used to engage in landward service. One day meeting a fisherman, the Doctor asked him how his sons were engaged, and being told they were in farm service, he said he thought that none of the fishers' sons were allowed to be so occupied. To which the fisherman replied—"That used to be the case, but since they were vaccinated they had so many of them noo, they did na ken fat te dee wi' them."

A ludicrous thing happened, when a man well on in years brought all his family, old and young, to be vaccinated. It having appeared that he had not been vaccinated himself, he was urged by the Doctor to submit to the operation first himself, but he refused, being apparently afraid of the pain.

After all the children had been operated upon, he was again urged to submit, upon which he said to the eldest boy—"Wast sair, Jock?" "Na, nae verra," said the boy. "Weel," said the father, "I wad nae care muckle to tak' a scrat o't mysel." As he was getting old the Doctor's hand got tremulous, and he devolved upon me the duty of vaccination, which I discharged till the Vaccination Act was passed, which made statutory provision for its discharge by others.

During what was all but a famine, in the year 1800 (I think it was), Dr. Morison bought meal from other quarters and lodged it in a granary in the neighbourhood, and the people who were in want were assembled and had it doled out to them with the Doctor's own hand from time to time; many being thereby saved from actual starvation.

He also contributed liberally to the funds which were raised for the endowment of the Church of Portlethen, for the erection of a new church and manse, and the reclamation of the barren ground, in which the manse was situated, for a glebe. This has been a great convenience to that extensive district.

But his greatest and last act of philanthropy in his parish was the erection, in 1837, of the foot suspension bridge over the Dee, which now unites the two divisions of the parish. Previous to its erection the only public means of communication between the one side of the river and the other was a parish boat, which was only used on Sundays

It could not, however, always be depended upon, as the river was often impassable owing to ice and heavy floods. The total cost of the bridge was about £1400, and, with the exception of a contribution of £30 from Mr. Menzies of Pitfoddels, which only sufficed for making the pathway between the south end of the bridge and the turnpike road, it was wholly defrayed by Dr. Morison. He bequeathed, moreover, a sum of money for keeping the bridge in repair, which had accumulated to such an amount as enabled the trustees of the fund to lay out about £300 a short time ago in thoroughly re-painting and repairing it. In the circumstances I have mentioned I am disappointed to hear, from time to time, some of the classes, who usually ride in their carriages, asking me, on passing the bridge, in a tone of complaint, "Why didn't Dr. Morison when he was about the thing build a bridge for carriages?" and those who do not ride in these vehicles inquiring in an equally complaining tone, "I say, Doctor, fat for didna Dr. Morison mak' his briggy for caerts?"

I cannot doubt my readers will be pleased with the information I have given them about the good deeds of this philanthropic, generous, and Christian-minded man.

When visiting his parishioners Dr. Morison used to take a note of the names of the members of each household. In some cases the heads of families, believing that, in doing so, he was committing the same sin as King David when he numbered the people, were unwilling to give up the names. On

one occasion he inquired of a man, who he suspected was withholding the names of some of his household, "Is that a', Sanners?" "Ou aye, sir," replied the man, "it's a' but the widifu' Buck, an' he's nae worth the mentionin'." Buck was the herd boy. The name *widifu* used to be applied to those poor neglected boys who often got into scrapes for which they were punished by their masters. The gallows used to be called the *woodie*, and a "woodiefu'" or "widifu'" was a person worthy of the gallows, although the man probably meant nothing stronger than that Buck was a rough mischievous cub.

Dr. Morison used to relate with spirit a case of copying sermons which I may here mention. A Minister residing in a seaport town on the coast of Aberdeenshire had preached a sermon which a skipper, one of his parishioners, who traded to London, thought very like one which he had read to his wife and family the previous Sunday from a sermon book which he had purchased in London. On the Sunday following he, with two brother skippers, took the book to church to ascertain the correctness of the suspicion. The minister in due time gave out a text which, true enough, the skipper found in the index of his book and pointed out to his friends. The minister then proceeded with the sermon, going on word for word with the sermon book for a sentence or two, which greatly excited the skipper, who, with a crony on each side, kept tracing the words in the book after the minister and saying, "see till him; see till him." The minister,

who used himself to tell the story, said, "I lookit doun and saw what they were at, so I turned ower twa leaves at ance, an' they never clappit saut upo' my tail after that."

The district of Portlethen, which, as I have said, was so much benefited by the liberality of Dr. Morison, is now a quoad-sacra parish with a large population, containing the famous fishing village of Findon and two others. There has been a church in that district from time immemorial. Before the Reformation, I believe, it was a family chapel. The old church was popularly called the "Red Kirk," because it was covered with red tiles, as a similar church in the adjoining parish of Fetteresso was called the "Sod Kirk," because it was roofed with sods, *i.e.*, rough turf cut from the moor. From the session records it appears that, about the middle of last century, these two churches were occupied, on alternate Sundays, by a licentiate of the church, Mr. Wilkie, to whom I shall afterwards refer, the people of Portlethen having been warned by the Kirk Session of Banchory to attend at Banchory Church when the preaching was at the Sod Kirk. That arrangement, however, did not last long, as Dr. Morison mentions in the New Statistical Account that, when he came to Banchory, in 1785, the Church at Portlethen was occupied by any strolling preacher who chose to hold forth to the people. From that time till 1840, a licentiate of the church officiated in it. When I came to the parish, the preacher was a Mr. Piric, but, on his death shortly afterwards, a Mr.

Law, Schoolmaster of Maryculter, was appointed to preach in the church on Sundays. His salary was at first £30, but was afterwards increased to £35 a-year, and a pony was presented to him. He was ordained minister of Portlethen, as a Chapel of Ease, in 1840, when he was provided with a more suitable salary and a manse, and he then gave up his school. Some years afterwards the church and a populous district around it were erected into the quoad sacra church and parish of Portlethen. Mr. Law was a man of great simplicity of character and a very attentive and conscientious minister. He ingratiated himself very much with the fishing population, by his kind and obliging disposition, and by the special notice he took of them in his intercessory prayer, and in particular of any dangers or accidents they had met with at sea. On one occasion when some of them were speaking of him, one of them said, "I wat Maister Law tak's terrible gweed notice o' his (us) in's prayers, an' o' onything that happens till's whan we're at the sea." "Aye," said another who went under the by-name of 'Michty Jeems,' and who had been nearly blown off the coast with his crew the week before by a sudden hurricane, "True's the word that ye say, man, for I wat he took gweed notice last Sabbath o' oor bla' (blow)."

I now introduce my readers to my maternal grandfather, Mr. JOHN HUTCHEON, who was settled as minister of Fetteresso in 1763, and was married to a daughter of Provost James Morison of Elsick, already referred to; he was a faithful and diligent

minister, a warm and kind-hearted friend, and he had a great fund of wit and humour. The stipends of ministers at that period were very small, but, notwithstanding, the manses were noted for hospitality. There were at that time few inns or places of entertainment for travellers, and every one, who had any means of doing so, exercised hospitality in a much more liberal, though in a much less sumptuous, way than at present. Every guest, of whatever degree, was welcome to a share of what was going. The parishioners in their turn were not wanting in liberality to the minister. Mr. Hutcheon had a fowl or something else sent him by some of his parishioners every week for his Sunday dinner. One day a country goodwife brought him a cock but earnestly requested him not to kill him, because he was a "terrible divertin' breet." "Ye see, sir," said she, "if ye were to set him down i' the fleer he would fecht wi' the leg o' the table, just as gin he were fechtin' wi' another cock, till he had scarcely a breath in's body."

There were several eccentric characters who were in the habit of paying him occasional visits. One of these, who was called Nelly Fullarton, on her first visit established her claim to hospitality by saying to my mother—"Ye see, Miss Hutcheon, "I'm the sister o' the bellman o' Benholm, and ye're "the dochter o' the minister o' Fetteresso: ye see, "Miss Hutcheon, we're baith kirk folk."

Of the guests who lodged all night, those who were more distinguished had a shake down in the

corner of the kitchen, in which they passed the night without taking off their clothes ; others lay on a bed of straw in the barn or byre. The distinction between these classes appears in the song of the Jolly Beggar, who, it is said,

> "Wad neither lie in barn,
> Nor yet wad he in byre ;
> But in a'hint the ha' door,
> Or afore the kitchen fire."

One of the better class of these humble visitors was a well-disposed, harmless creature, who made great pretensions to learning and boasted of his collection of books, which he expressed great veneration for and prayed for as follows before going to bed—"Bless my books : all my bible books, all my *hocus-pocus* and all my *leger-de-main* books, and all my other books, whether particularly mentioned at this time or not." This petition is somewhat similar to one which an eccentric minister, of whom I have heard, used to offer up in the intercessory part of his prayer for "all thieves, murderers, and probationers, half-pay officers, and decayed gentlemen."

Many odd things happened in Mr. Hutcheon's parochial visitations and in the discharge of his other ministerial duties. On the occasion of his visiting a parishioner whose wife had just died, he found him in a most disconsolate condition. For a time all that he could say to him was of no avail ; at last, being somewhat impressed by the consolation given to him, the man said, "weel, sir, I'll warrant she'll be by this time in Beelzebub's bosom."

The minister, greatly shocked, said, "Abraham's, you mean, Peter!" "Ou aye," quoth Peter, "Abraham's or Beelzebub's, ye ken, sir, they're baith Scriptur' names." I lately heard of a similar mistake as to Scripture names having been made by a simple old man who lived in the village of Crichie, near Old Deer, At a time when pheasants were uncommon in Aberdeenshire he said to his wife one evening, "As I was gaun ower the hill o' Knock this mornin' I saw a Galaatian cock." "Hoot na, man," she replied, "You mean an Ephaisian cock." "O weel, maybe," he remarked, "I'm sometimes nae sure aboot that Scriptur' names." To return to Mr. Hutcheon, an elderly man called upon him one day and said, "Will you come and bapteeze a late thing o' a bairn to me, sir," which he promised to do. In the course of the ceremony, on the minister asking the name, the father said, "I think, sir, I'll ca't aéfter mysel, for I dinna think I'll hae ony mair."

About a century ago ministers of an eccentric turn of mind were in the habit of urging their hearers to the discharge of their religious duties, by setting before them Satan's subtlety, and the varieties of his wiles for ensnaring and ruining them, and the difficulty of overcoming him. A minister, whom Mr. Hutcheon spoke of, while preaching on this subject suddenly broke out into the following apostrophe, "See till him sittin' there in the crap o' the wa'. What shall we do wi' him, my brethren? He winna hang, for he's as licht's a

feather; neither will he droun, my brethren, for he can swim like a cork; but we'll shoot him wi' the gun o' the gospel," and then, putting himself in the position of one aiming at an object with a gun, he cried, "*put too*," imitating the noise of a gun, "he's doon like a dead cra." (The crap o' the wa' is the space between the wall and the unceiled roof of an ill-finished building.)

Mr. Hutcheon used to tell a story of an old man, who had been brought before the General Assembly, and had been ordered to be censured in their presence for some offence of which he had been guilty. It seemed that, while the clerk was writing out the minute, the old man lost his patience, and, at last, rising up and addressing the moderator, he said, "Come awa', moderawtor, wi' your reproof, that brak's nae banes."

My nearest neighbour for many years, Mr. BOWER, minister of Maryculter, was one of the simplest and purest-minded men, and one of the best samples of a Christian minister that it was ever my good fortune to meet with. No man in this country was more respected and beloved. When he was settled at Maryculter, where he succeeded my father in 1811, he was very little acquainted with country matters; and an over-sensitiveness of duty, at the outset of his ministry, made him do and say things which appear ridiculous. It was said that he wished to prevent his servant from milking his cows on Sunday, and would not allow his horse to plough with that of a neighbour who was a Roman Catho-

lic. He had a man-servant, named Sandie Cockie, who was a great favourite with him. He was a great miser, and on his death, after having been forty or fifty years in Mr. Bower's service, it was found that he had scraped together about £2000. In his repositories a verse of poetry was found, which he had composed at the time of the Disruption about the Free Church people in the parish, whom he greatly disliked. They had, at first, difficulty in getting a site for a Free Church, and their first meeting was held in the barn of the farmer at a place called Whitestone, the farmer himself being called "Whitie" or "Fitie." On that occasion the nucleus of a congregation was formed, which gave rise to the following effort of Sandy's poetical genius:—

Last week there cam' a blethrin' futur'
Into the paeriss o' Maryculter,
An' he's taen aff a little swarm,
An' skeppit it in Fitie's barn.

Mr. Bower told me that he once nearly lost Sandy as a servant. "He came to me one day and said, 'Sir, I'm gaun to leave you,' and I said, 'what for, Sandy? Have you any fault to find with your master or mistress or with your work?' 'Eh, na, sir, naething o' the kin'. I can manage my wark fine, and nae man ever had a better maister and mistress, an' mair pleesant fellow-servans.' 'What is it then, Sandy?' 'Ye gie me ower muckle wages, sir.' But you can't get less, Sandy.' 'Weel, sir, gin that be the case I

canna bide.' But the good man ended by telling me that, before all was done, instead of getting *less*, Sandy got *more*. I said that, as that was what he wanted all along, he had a singular way of going about the matter.

Mr. Bower had a herd-boy who, he said, rather suddenly got into a habit of incessant talking. On mentioning this to me he said—"I said one day to the boy, 'Boy, how have you got into that habit of incessant chattering? You used not to talk so much.' To this the boy replied, 'It was twa loons, sir, that cam' into the kitchie ae fore-nicht an' learnt me.'"

The few following anecdotes were told me by him :—One was of a minister who, at the close of an extempore discourse, which he thought somewhat short, scratched his head, and, with a blank look, said at the conclusion, "A great deal more might be said on this subject if it would *occur*." Many a minister has felt the same difficulty, without saying anything about it. Another was of a minister who was very desirous to deliver his sermons as effectively as possible, and used to underline any word he considered important ; under what he considered more important, he placed two, and under what he considered more emphatic still he placed three lines, and, when he reached the climax, he wrote on the margin of his manuscript, "and here I greet."

Mr. ROBERT CROLL, of Bervie, was rather a remarkable man in his day. My father, who lived for

some years, in early life, in the adjoining parish of Benholm, gave me the following account of him. He was the son of a very poor man, and, when very young, was engaged to herd the cattle of a farmer in Kincardineshire. His master, an exemplary man, was in the habit of reading the Bible to his servants on Sunday evenings, and making them tell in succession what each remembered of the chapter. The first time that young Croll was present at that exercise, the farmer, after examining the rest, said to him, "Robbie, man, do ye min' ony o' the chapter that's been read?" "Fat pairt o't would ye like?" said Robbie. "Ony pairt," said the farmer, "I daur say it's nae muckle that ye min' o't. Ye may jist begin at the beginning." So Robbie did begin, and repeated the chapter from beginning to end without missing a word. This and other similar instances created a belief in the country that he was possessed of extraordinary genius, and he was assisted in obtaining an education to fit him for going to College. The Professor of Mathematics at first thought him quite a wonder in consequence of the extreme accuracy with which he demonstrated the most difficult propositions in Euclid, but he found that, on changing the letters, his pupil was completely at fault. He could then neither demonstrate them nor understand the demonstrations when explained to him. After he was licensed, he preached without a paper, and was in consequence highly esteemed by the common people. He could preach any sermon that

he had read but once; and it was said he never made any sermons of his own. He was appointed to the church and parish of Bervie, where he officiated as minister till about the year 1820. His wonderful memory may be said to have been the only gift he possessed. One of his parishioners once said to him that he wondered he was not afraid of sticking when he preached without a paper, to which Mr. Croll replied that he was not the least afraid of that, upon which the honest man rejoined, "Maister Croll, my advice to you is, keep aye win' i' the bag and never stop, for gin ye stop a' body 'll ken that ye're wrang; but gin ye keep on there's nae ane in twenty 'll ken whether ye're speakin' sense or nonsense."

I have heard several amusing anecdotes of a Mr. MARTIN SHANKS, who was, about the middle of the last century, minister of the parish of Banchory-Ternan. In the past days there were eccentricities in the style and manner of preaching which would not be tolerated in the present day—free and easy altercations between the minister and the precentor, and the minister and the beadle, and rebukes administered during divine service to offenders distracting the attention of the congregation by sleeping or any kind of levity or misbehaviour. But the eccentricities, of which I shall give a few specimens, were uncommon, even in the times in which they occurred, as appears from their having been handed down to present times. Martin Shanks was a great friend of the laird of Tilquhilly of that period, who

was an heritor and neighbour of his own, and, like himself, was noted for his eccentricities. The minister used to sit late on Saturday nights, and, when he became old, he was sometimes drowsy in the pulpit on the Sunday mornings. It was, at that time, usual in that parish, and I believe in others also, in consequence of the irregularity of the congregation in coming up to divine service, for the precentor to continue singing till the minister stopped him by tapping him on the head with his finger, which was called giving him the "putt." One day, after entering the pulpit, Mr. Shanks fell asleep, and the precentor, having sung till he could sing no longer, at last stopped. This awakened the minister, who got up in the excited state usual to those who are suddenly awakened out of sleep and said to the precentor, "What was your business, Tammas, to stop before ye got the putt?" To which Tammas replied, "It's easy for you, minister, to sit snotterin' an' sleepin' there, and to haud me baain' and baain' here till there's scarcely a breath in my body." The following anecdote, which I have lately heard is already in print, used also to be told of Martin Shanks:—On one occasion, when he was assimilating the nature of the pastoral relation to that of a shepherd and his sheep, he said, "My brethren, supposing me to be the shepherd, and you to be the sheep, and Tammas Sangster the precentor to be the sheep-dog." But Tammas replied, "Minister, I'll be no man's sheep-dog." Said the minister, "I am speaking mystically." "Na, na," rejoined Tammas, "I ken fine, ye wisna

speaking mystically, ye wis speakin' *maliciously*, and jist to gar the folk lauch at me when we were oot about." One Sunday Tammas did not make his appearance at all, and the minister said to the Laird of Tilquhilly, who was present, "Ye maun precent the day, Tilquhilly." "Na," said Tilquhilly, "I canna precent, an' I winna precent." On his way home that day the Laird fell, and hurt his leg so severely that he was confined to bed for several weeks afterwards. The minister went from time to time to give him comfort, which he did not much take to heart; and one day, getting very impatient, he said, "I wonder, minister, what's gart the Lord tak' sic an ill will at me. I hinna been a Sunday oot o' the kirk till this mis-shanter cam' ower me for sax months, and see what's happened to me; but the Laird o' Crathes has been scarcely ance in't a' that time, and naething's happened to him ava." Said the minister, "Gin ye had precented when I bade you, maybe this wadna hae happened to you."

In the days of Martin Shanks sermons were usually very long, and were measured by a half-hour sand glass, which stood on the precentor's desk and was turned by him every time it ran out. The long continuance of the preaching was called "insisting." When Martin was getting old, his sermons became shorter, which gave Tilquhilly occasion to suggest in private the necessity of his getting an assistant as he was not able to "insist" as formerly. The minister took no notice of this at the time, but the

next Sunday he preached a sermon of unusual length, in consequence of which the precentor had to turn the glass till every one was wearied out. At last Martin addressing his friend said, "Is that eneuch, Tilquhilly?" "Aye is't, minister," said the Laird. "Weel then," rejoined Martin, "dinna ye be sayin' again that I canna insist."

Mr. BENJAMIN MERCER, or "Ben" Mercer, as he was commonly called, was minister of Forbes, and afterwards of Kildrummy, on Donside. He was a man of eccentric habits and of great bodily strength, by which he kept his parishioners in awe when they got into brawls—no unusual occurrence in those times in the upper districts of Aberdeenshire. He carried about with him a large stick which he called "Liowes," a corruption of Lewis, in which island he had spent the early part of his life as a schoolmaster. In the prospect of the invasion of this country by the French about the beginning of this century, Mr. Mercer was applied to by the neighbouring landed proprietors to endeavour to induce his parishioners to join a corps of volunteers which was being formed in the district. He consequently called a meeting of the young men of the parish, and, after an address to stimulate their patriotism, laying "Liowes" upon his shoulder, he urged them to follow him to the place of *rendezvous*, saying, by way of encouragement, "Come, lads, follow me, for I aye delichtit in fechtin'."

Mr. Mercer had a great antipathy to tea; and his wife's drinking tea was a great subject of discord

between them, which at last ended in a separation. None of his family reached the years of maturity but one son, who seems, like his father, to have "delichtit in fechtin'." He served with distinction under the Duke of Wellington in his campaigns in Spain, and was greatly beloved by his comrades. His death was very sad. He had attracted the attention of the Duke in an engagement which terminated in victory, and was promoted to a captaincy on the field of battle. In the height of his excitement he got upon the parapet of the bridge, on which he was standing, to respond to the cheering of his comrades when a shot from a concealed enemy pierced his heart.

Mr. Mercer's habits of living were very peculiar. He said his garden and his glebe were his West Indies, as he manufactured his oats into coffee which he sweetened with honey made by his own bees. He used little butchers' meat, but ham of pigs of his own feeding, considering what he called "*flash* (flesh) meat" an unnecessary article of diet. A curious account is given of an interview between him and Mr. Browne, a son of one of his parishioners, who was afterwards minister of Coull, in Aberdeenshire. In that and in other parts of this district when the name Brown was spelt Browne it was pronounced Brownie. After having passed his courses in divinity, and travelled for some time on the continent as tutor to a gentleman's son, Mr. Browne returned to his native parish and called upon Mr. Mercer, announcing himself as Mr. Brown.

He was so greatly changed that Ben either did not or pretended not to know him. After some explanation, however, he said, "I ken, my young man, where ye are noo. Ye'll be a son o' Sanners Brownie's o' Brig o' Scuttery." Mr. Brown was not asked to dine; Ben, after consulting Bassy his housekeeper, saying, by way of apology for not doing so, that there was no flash meat in the house. Not long afterwards Mr. Browne appeared before the Presbytery of Alford on trials with a view to his being licensed. After the Presbytery seemed satisfied, the Moderator, in the usual way, enquired whether any member of Presbytery had any other questions to put to him. "I hae ae question to put till him," said Ben. "Can ye tell me, my young man, what was Jeremeeah's fader's name?" The other members of Presbytery thought the question a very odd one, and Mr. Browne was unable to answer it. Upon which Ben said to him, "Ye need na' be ashamed at a', my young man, that ye dinna ken Jeremeeah's fader's name; mony a man does na ken his *ain* fader's name."

One day, when Ben was preaching, a man in the corner of a seat near him fell asleep. Of this Ben took no notice, till he began to snore; he then said to the beadle, "Charlie, wauken up Sandy Mutch; he's sittin' i' the corner o' that squar' seat snorin'." Sandy, on being roused, wakened up in a hurried and excited state, whereupon the minister said to him, "Sandy, I'm nae freely sae hard upon sleepers i' the kirk as some folk, because the preacher is

sometimes as much to blame as the hearer;" and then holding out his big clenched fist, with a threatening gesture, he added, "but, Sandy, I debar *snorin'*."

One of his parishioners, who had lost his wife, within two or three weeks after her death sent instructions to the Session Clerk to have himself proclaimed with another woman. His relatives, having heard of the first proclamation, were greatly vexed, and took it upon them to remonstrate with him, and so did the minister, who said that it was an outrage upon the decencies of Christian society that he should be married to another wife "afore Kirsty was cauld i' the grun'"; and urged him forthwith to prevent the proclamation being proceeded with. To which the bridegroom replied, "that may be a' very true that ye say; but, as things hae gane on sae far, we'll just need to let them gang fordards, an', in the mids o' the meantime, Kirsty 'ill be queelin'."

A former neighbour of mine, who died many years ago, mentioned to me an amusing incident that had occurred in the church of Glengairn (Ballater), when he was present. The Sunday was very stormy, and it was very difficult for any one to attend divine service. When my neighbour and a friend of his entered the church, the minister was in his seat, and only two others were present. The minister did not seem inclined to preach to so small a congregation, and sat waiting to see whether more would appear. The precentor, who was a

little old man, with a cauliflower full-bottomed wig, such as was worn by old men in those days, becoming impatient, stood up, and, turning round to the minister, said to him, "Lat oot," upon which the minister at once began the service. As it proceeded a portion of the drifted snow which had penetrated the roof fell upon the precentor's wig; and he, not at first knowing the cause, rose up and said to the minister, "Fat's that ye're deein' to me noo?" The minister replied, "It wasna' me, Peter; it was only the sna' comin' through the slates."

A story is told of a former minister of Kinneff, who seems to have been an original. He told his people that he had just seen the evil one, who had threatened to visit the congregation that day, and that he did not know what would have happened if he had not wrestled with him and overcome him, and that he was now tethered on the "heugh head." A parishioner from the neighbouring parish of Dunnottar, who was present on the occasion, went back next Sunday, as he said to one of his neighbours, "to see the deevil flitted."

From the old Statistical Account it appears that the stipends of ministers of the Established Church generally varied from £50 to £100 a-year, and that but a small portion of them exceeded the latter sum. The ministers had besides, it is true, manses and glebes, which last however in most cases necessitated the keeping a man-servant and a horse. As ministers' families, as a general rule, are at least not smaller than those of other

people, and are in a different position, and require to be brought up in a different way from others possessing the same means, it cannot be doubted that ministers had then, as they have even now, great difficulties and struggles in bringing them up and educating them. As an example, I shall mention the case of a Mr. Morice, minister of Kincardine O'Neil, who, with a manse, glebe, and appurtenances, and a stipend of only about £50, had a family of seventeen children. Notwithstanding all the straits and difficulties which the up-bringing of such a family involved, Mrs. Morice, a contented, easy-minded lady, who was a friend of my mother's, said, "she wished she had just ae ither lassie to make out the dizzen an' a half." The children got only one pair of shoes in the year, and if these were worn out before the end of the time, they got no more. They had a dry barley meal scone for forenoon's piece (lunch), and when any of them said, "O, mamma, gie us something to our piece?" she used to reply, "indeed, my dears, ye'll just need to gar the black spot kitchie the white." (Butter, cheese, ham, &c., would be called "kitchie," and the black spots were the consequence of hasty baking). Most of Mr. Morice's family reached the age of man and womanhood, and bore the marks of the good-upbringing at the manse; and all of them prospered in the world. Some of them I knew intimately. Two of the sons, who were wood merchants and contractors for wood for the navy, amassed very large fortunes.

Many other ministers at the same period had also

great struggles, and, by economy, industry, and God's blessing, surmounted them all; but few families probably prospered in the world like Mr. Morice's.

But if ministers, who had stipends, manses, and glebes, had to endure the hard hand of poverty, there were others, serving in preaching stations, who had still greater hardships to undergo. I shall mention the case of one of them who served in the preaching station in the parish of Fetteresso, called the Sod Kirk, to which I referred in my short notice of Portlethen. It was near the house of Elsick, and Provost Morison and his family were in the habit of attending there. The minister's name was Wilkie, and he, like the Provost, was a staunch adherent of the Brunswick dynasty, and made himself conspicuous by his public expressions of attachment to it. This attracted the attention of Jacobites in Aberdeenshire, and subjected Mr. Wilkie to persecution from that party, which, but for his success in concealing himself, might have cost him his life, but, it no doubt, increased the bond of union between the Provost and himself. He had, I understand, nothing to live upon but the liberality of his congregation, who were generally very poor, and the collections in the church were his main source of livelihood; but even these, he complained, were not unfrequently dishonestly withheld from him. It would seem that at that period a quantity of bad copper found its way into church plates; and this, happening very frequently in Wilkie's case, gave him grounds for reproving his hearers for their con-

duct in so doing. In adverting to this discreditable practice, he said one Sunday from the pulpit, "When ye gang to Aberdeen to sell your butter, and your eggs, and your cheese, and get a bawbee that ye're dootfu' about, I'm tell't that ye'll gie't a toss up atween ye'r finger and ye'r thoom, an' say 'its nae muckle worth, but it'll dee weel eneuch for Wilkie.'" "I ken," he added, "when a man's poor he's little thocht o', and I understan' when ye're amo' yoursels ye'll be speakin' lichtly o' me, an' sayin', 'as Wilkie says'; but whether I be wilkie or buckie ye'll better min' what I say to you, or it may be the waur wi' you some time." (In this country whelks or periwinkles are called wilks, and their shells buckies.) I find in the Records of the Kirk-Session of Fetteresso, about the period of Wilkie's ministry, that the Treasurer stated that he had taken eighteen pounds weight of bad copper to Aberdeen, which he had sold there; and that on another occasion he had complained of the difficulty of counting the offering, in consequence of the number of *doits* contained in it. A doit, I believe, is half a farthing.

Mr. Wilkie's sermons were usually very long, and Provost Morison, who sat opposite to him, on getting tired, occasionally fastened his watch to the top of his stick to warn him that he ought to stop. But Wilkie, who, tho' poor, had a very independent spirit, seldom gave heed to the Provost's hint. This was told me by the Provost's son, Dr. George Morison.

I shall mention one other instance of a minister's straitened circumstances and the hardships thence arising. This gentleman (Mr. Walker) was of the Episcopalian persuasion, and officiated at Muchalls, a fishing village about two miles from the scene of Mr. Wilkie's labours, which was almost entirely composed of Episcopalians. His congregation was drawn mainly from that village and another neighbouring village, called Skateraw, now Newtonhill, which was also almost entirely composed of Episcopalians. It may be observed that there are three fishing villages in the parish of Fetteresso the inhabitants of which, with very few exceptions, are Episcopalians, and the same is the case in the parishes of Dunnottar and Kinneff immediately adjoining to the south; while in the *quoad sacra* parish of Portlethen formerly part of Banchory-Devenick, immediately adjoining to the north of the Skateraw, there are likewise three large fishing villages, Dounies, Portlethen, and Findon, where almost all are Presbyterians. I cannot tell how this is to be accounted for, seeing that Mr. Gordon, minister of Banchory-Devenick before the restoration of Presbyterianism in 1690, was a rigid Episcopalian, and the author of a work, famous in its day, called the "Reformed Bishop," and one who, though he accepted the benefit of the "Act of Indulgence," and continued minister of the parish till 1714, encouraged and maintained Episcopalian forms to the last. I find from the Kirk Session Records, that in the year 1712 upwards of 200 copies of the English Prayer

Book had reached the parish for the use of the congregation. In July of that year "sixty-two service books were distribute among the parishioners in order to setting up the English liturgy in this church;" and on 26th October following—"the liturgy of the Church of England was first used in the publick worship of God in this parochial church, in order to the continuance thereof; for advancing of which excellent worship there were 200 books of common prayer given to the minister out of the charity books sent from England to Scotland to be distribute gratis, which 200 books were distribute some weeks before among such of the parishioners as were capable to make use of them." A folio book for the minister, and a quarto for the clerk, were also provided, and kneeling boards were placed in the pews. This mode of worship appears to have been used till April in the following year, when a hiatus in the records occurs, which extends from April, 1713, to March, 1716. After the latter date there is no further mention of it, and all the books must have disappeared in no long time, as Dr. Morison, who came to the parish in 1785, had never seen a copy, and the late Mr. Thomson of Banchory in vain attempted to obtain one.

After this long digression, I must return to the Episcopalian minister at Muchalls, who was a very worthy man, and said to be very attentive to all the duties of his office, for which he was miserably recompensed. But, notwithstanding his poverty, he married, and, like most other ministers of all

denominations with small means, had a large family. To none of the sons was he able to give a liberal education. They were bred to trades, and the daughters, with, I believe, only one exception, were occupied as domestic servants. He never had but one servant, who entered his service in early life and lived with him till her death at an advanced age. Her name, Jane Brydie, is worthy of being recorded. She continued with Mr. Walker in all his straits and difficulties. If she got wages she accepted them, if not she never asked for them; she was true and faithful to the family to the last. When far advanced in life Mr. Walker obtained, through some kind friend, the office of Episcopalian minister at Kirkaldy. Thither he migrated with his faithful wife, one daughter, and Jane Brydie. The emoluments were not great, but they were affluence to Mr. Walker. All the four are now dead. The daughter died last, about three years ago, at an advanced age. She had made a good marriage, and was in great comfort during the latter period of her life.

An old woman of the name of Bell Meldrum, who was a midwife at Muchalls, has told me some amusing anecdotes about Mr. Walker, all which tend to show the extent of his difficulties in the bringing up of his family, and, as neither myself nor my readers need be much concerned about the unities and order in my work, which will probably only be read when people have nothing else to do, I shall so far violate them by telling my readers

something about Bell herself. In her younger days she had been a servant to my grandfather, Mr. Hutcheon, Minister of Fetteresso, but she afterwards qualified herself as a midwife under Dr. William Dyce, who, in the early part of this century, was an eminent accoucheur in Aberdeen. She began her professional duties in the year 1812, and discharged them for a period of sixty years, during which, as she herself expressed it, she had "fuschen hame" (brought into the world) 1750 bairns. She told me that when Mr. Walker saw her going to his wife on one of her occasions, he said to a friend who was with him, "That's the howdie; I never like to see ony o' thae kitties comin' about the house,"—in consequence probably of the expense created on such occasions, according to the old proverb, that "clecken time's canty time." Bell told another anecdote of Mr. Walker. A young friend of his who had been lately married, and had just got the first addition to his family, received the following sage advice from him, along with other counsel needful in the circumstances. "When the howdies are paid they're aye "ready oot wi' their han's wi' a luck-penny. But "dinna tak' it man; for gin you do, ye'll soon see them "back again at you." Bell died in the spring of 1876, at the age of ninety. She had become poor in her last days, and, for two or three years before her death, her neighbours annually got up a subscription ball for her behoof. She opened the last one held before her death, by dancing in the first reel. These balls were dances, but, within my recollection, the

country people used to call any kind of social gathering a "ball." They spoke of "balls o' dancin'," "balls o' caertin," (card playing), "balls o' drinkin'," and "balls o' tea."

Catechising.

Catechising, a very important part of clerical duty during the earlier part of my ministry, is now falling into desuetude. The minister intimated once a year from the pulpit that he would hold what were called diets of catechising at certain places in different districts in the parish, where it was expected that the neighbours with their families and servants would attend. The Shorter Catechism was the text-book used, and questions were asked generally at the younger people present, but not exclusively, as some of the older people, who were the best acquainted with the catechism and the doctrines contained in it, were disappointed when no questions were put to them. On these occasions the minister had an opportunity of ascertaining what his audience knew of the meaning of the questions asked, and of explaining with greater simplicity than he could do in the pulpit the leading truths of the Gospel. I found this exercise very profitable to my parishioners ; but gradually the older people became unwilling to have questions put to them — whether because they thought themselves too wise to require this kind of teaching, or because the children, by the superior teaching in the parish schools in recent years, became more intelligent than themselves, I cannot

say; but so it is, and, in my parish at least, they gave up attendance at catechising altogether.

I hear the Shorter Catechism much decried in the present day, as being sectarian, hard to be understood, and unintelligible to young people. It is, however, the Catechism adopted by the Free, the United Presbyterian, and other Evangelical Churches in Scotland, and it contains, I am satisfied, no doctrine which can reasonably be objected to by any one who subscribes *bona fide* the 39 articles of the Church of England. The great fundamental doctrines of the Gospel are set forth in it with logical precision, and in the most clear and distinct language. If the teacher comprehends the system himself, and is possessed of the faculty of imparting what he knows to others, he can, through the Catechism, convey a knowledge of divine truth to young people at an age when those who are ignorant of the fact might suppose they were incapable of comprehending it. I can vouch for these assertions from the experience of many years; and they may be attested by the inspection of any good parish or other school in Aberdeenshire. I rejoice in this opportunity of bearing my testimony to this admirable and in some quarters maligned system of scriptural doctrine for the instruction of the young. I once heard an anecdote of a great German divine who, many years ago, visited this country when the intercourse between it and the continent was less frequent than at present. On being asked what was the most wonderful thing he had seen, he replied it was,—the

best system of divinity in the world sold for a half-penny.

Admitting all that has been said, it may be readily imagined that catechising being a long word, its meaning might be mistaken by ignorant people. A fisherman in the village of Findon, which was for some time under my charge, came one day to call on me, and, as I was from home, he asked the servant to say that he wished me to call upon him. But as many of the fishers in that and other fishing villages bear the same name, and, as he could not give a distinct message otherwise, being at his wits' end, he at last said to the servant, "O lassie, it's the hoose whar Maister Paal hads the *chasteesens!*" Some ministers, as may be imagined, rendered the duty of catechising a much less formidable business than others. A friend of mine, on his way to Old Deer to visit the minister there, met with an old servant of his own, and, on his asking where she had been, she said she had been at "ane o' Maister Morison's exaemins." "What kind o' an exaemer's he, Janet?" "O," said Janet, "a terrible fine exaemer; spiers a hantle o' questons, an' answers them a' himsel'."

On one occasion, when my grandfather, Mr. Hutcheon, was catechising, he saw an old man who seemed to be solely occupied with his own thoughts, and to be taking no interest in what was going on. When the minister, however, in the course of the exercise, began to speak of Noah's Ark, and of the beasts that were in it, he was all attention. At last

unable to contain himself any longer, he said in the hearing of all present, "Wis there a' kin' o' beasts there, sir?" "O yes," said the minister. "An' was the tod (the fox) there?" "There can be no doubt of that," said the minister." "Wae wirth him," said the carle, "that he ever wan oot o't, for bonny's the twa wedders that he worried to me this mornin'."

My predecessor, Dr. Morison, was minister of Oyne, in the Presbytery of Garioch, before he was translated to Banchory-Devenick. Mr. Cushny, father of the late venerable minister at Rayne, was his successor, while a Mr. Turing, commonly called in the district Mr. Tierwin, was his predecessor. Mr. Cushny, soon after his appointment, while holding a diet of catechising in the parish, found an old man who appeared to him to be very ignorant. In consequence he very sharply rebuked him for his ignorance, adding that it was disgraceful to see a man so far advanced in life unable to answer so simple a question. The man bore the reproof patiently for a while; but, as the minister continued, he at last, losing his temper, said, "Sir, that's a queston that I cu'd hae answered afore ye wis born; its only you that canna spier't. Auld Maister Tierwin wad hae made mair oot o' a 'to' (which he pronounced *toe*) or a 'the' than you, or George Muirison either, wad mak' oot o' a' Effectual Callin'."

Kirk Officers and Precentors.

Under the title of Kirk Officer used to be comprehended, in country parishes, the Beadle, the

Bellman, and the Gravedigger, and a very important personage the man was who exercised one, and especially the whole, of these functions. He used, in former times, to attend the minister in his pastoral visitations and at baptisms; it was his duty also to keep out, and put out, dogs from the church; to hand up, and take down, the church bible and psalm book; to advertise sales by auction, and give other notices after divine service. He had, likewise, to act as officer to the kirk session, and to summon culprits to undergo Church discipline; he often also undertook, as a labour of love, to attend upon and patronise ministers and probationers who officiated in the minister's absence, and he was also newsmonger, or chronicler, in the parish. Notwithstanding these multifarious duties, the kirk officer was not unfrequently the idlest man in the parish. The emoluments for the whole of the duties were very small, and the office was seldom coveted but by aged and used up men.

As others have recorded most of the staple anecdotes about kirk officers, I shall only submit to my readers the few following, which I presume have never before appeared in print. There was a beadle in this parish named Robie Still, who used to "*scry* the roups," and make other notices in the churchyard; he was also carrier to the minister, my predecessor, and to an invalid lady, his sister, for whom he executed little commissions in Aberdeen. But, as Robie could not read writing, he got one of his neighbours to stand behind him, and read out, from

over his shoulder, from the slips of paper upon which they were written, the notices to be made, in a tone of voice to enable Robie to hear them. On one occasion he took out a wrong paper by mistake, and, to the great amusement of the listeners, he bawled at the top of his voice, "Miss Morison's pills as usual." A beadle of my grandfather's, at Fetteresso, is said to have amused the listeners by thus scrying a roup, "A-hoise, an' anither a-hoise, there will be sold at Stanehive, on Tyesday neisht, a quantity of haberdash, an' gin onybody wants to ken what that is, it's piggery" (crockery-ware). Those who have heard messengers-at-arms proclaiming interdicts, or other such notices, must have observed that they begin with the words, *O yes, O yes, O yes*, which is a corruption of the French word *oyez*, from which the law court *oyer and terminer (hear and determine)* takes its name, and of which the *a-hoise* of the Fetteresso bellman is a corruption.

Many years ago ministers were much annoyed by dogs, which were allowed by their owners to follow them to church. In consequence of the disturbance and distraction thus created during divine service, it was part of the beadle's duty to put dogs out. For this purpose in some parishes he kept an instrument called a *clip*, of the construction of a blacksmith's tongs, and having long wooden handles with a joint near the point by which, without injury to himself, he could lay hold of the intruding animal and drag him out. These instruments were not in use in my

time, but the late minister of Durris told me that one of his friends being annoyed by a dog during the delivery of his sermon, and being unable to bear it any longer, said to his beadle, "Peter, man, canna you put out that dog?" "Na," said Peter, "he winna gang oot, sir." "Canna ye clip him then?" said the minister. "Na, sir," said Peter, "I canna dee't, he's a terrible surly-like beast, an' I'm fear't at him."

My old friend Mr. Grant, the predecessor of my friend the late worthy minister of Methlick, was at one period of his ministry much annoyed by dogs during divine service in the church, and had found clip and beadle and much scolding of the congregation all ineffectual for ridding him of the annoyance. On one occasion he found an unexpected ally who did him good service. He was preaching with great animation and vigour as usual, when a large black dog came stepping up the passage with great formality, moving his long tail from side to side, and sniffing at the entrance of every seat in order to find out his master. As bad luck for him would have it he stopped at one of the seats where a rough half-witted looking fellow was sitting with his chin leaning upon a stick, which he clasped with both his hands. The fellow, thinking that the dog was stopping in order to bite, gave him a smart blow upon the nose, and down fell the dog stunned at his feet. On seeing this the minister was greatly delighted, and, having halted, said to the man with great emphasis, "Thank you for that, sir," and then proceeded with his discourse.

Harry Likely, minister of Oldmeldrum, was a very eccentric character, of whose sayings and doings there are still traditions in the parish. The following anecdote was told me in early life by a friend, then minister of Ellon. One day when Mr. Likely was preaching he suddenly paused, and said to the beadle, "Tammas, pit oot that dog there that's lyin' in the pass, he's like to gar me lauch, gashin' an' gnappin' there at the fleas. Pit him oot, man, an' dinna miss a thud o' him till ye hae him bye Nether Fowlie's door, an' haste ye back to the worship."

The parish grave-digger is entitled to a small sum, fixed by the heritors, generally a few shillings, as grave-digger's dues, for each interment. At the burial of an old man in the churchyard of the parish of King-Edward, the grave-digger, likewise an old man, charged the relatives of the deceased thirty shillings as grave-digger's dues, which was greatly more than he was entitled to exact. On their complaining to the minister, he sent for the grave-digger and rebuked him sharply for the overcharge. At first he made no reply, but, after the minister had asked him repeatedly, "What could you mean, Tammas, by making such an overcharge?" Tammas at last said in self-justification, "Weel ye see, sir, the wye was this. Fan the corp an' me was twa loons he chaeted me oot o' therty shillings i' the trock o' a watch; an' ye see it was my last chance, gin I hadna gotten't aff o' him noo I wadna hae gotten't aff o' him ava." Trock means an exchange—French *troquer*.

In some of my anecdotes about ministers of past days precentors have played a prominent part. The following, in which a precentor is the leading character, is curious as having reference to an old custom of country congregations which has long disappeared. It is well known that, before service begins in the country, the people collect in groups in the churchyard and discuss current events. But in old days they used to stand in the passages or "passes" of the church and converse together till the minister appeared, when they dispersed to their seats. While they were so collected, the precentor was in his desk singing verses of a psalm, which he did by first reading out, and then singing, the psalm line by line —each line being read and sung before he went on to the next. In the church of Auchterless the people used to block up the "passes" so much that the county families who attended church had great difficulty in getting to their pews. The minister had used every method, by expostulation and otherwise, to get them to keep the passages clear, but in vain. At last the precentor agreed to try what he could do in the matter. Accordingly the next Sunday, while he was singing the first verse of the first psalm in his lateran, he observed that the principal heritor and his family were prevented by the crowd from getting to their places. He at once went down, and, after some trouble, succeeded in getting the passages cleared. He then returned to his place, and gave out the next line of the psalm, which, by an amusing coincidence, was—"Nor stands in sinners' way."

My father used to relate his recollections of the excitement and disturbances occasioned in this district, towards the end of last century, by the introduction of the amended paraphrases and new tunes. There was a precentor in the church of Old Machar—a very active little man, full of energy and spirit, who was a great stickler for the old ways. He had given grievous offence to the opposite or innovating party, who, on one occasion, pursued him in the street and threatened him with bodily harm. Being hard pressed he ran up an outer stone stair which led to the second floor of a house, and, by a great effort, clambered on to the roof, where he sat with his legs astride on the top, out of the reach of his pursuers. When fairly settled, he gave out the words in one of the psalms, "I watch, and like a sparrow am on the house-top alone," and sang them with great spirit to one of the old tunes—thus disappointing and exasperating his persecutors.

Pedlars.

When communication between town and country was much more difficult and less frequent than at present, when a newspaper was a comparatively rare sight, and when shops were not established throughout the country as at present, these wants were in some measure made up by pedlars, or travelling merchants as they were called, who supplied their customers with news and clothing. In the words of Andrew Fairservice, they were "a great convenience in a country-side that's scant o'

borough towns," and many of them were of a much more respectable class than those who at present perambulate the country. They were generally welcome guests, and were, when necessary, supplied with food and lodging by their customers. As manses, notwithstanding the small stipends of the ministers, were always noted for hospitality, the pedlars were not unfrequent guests there. An anecdote was told me many years ago of one of these itinerant merchants, who was to spend the night at the Manse of Craigdam, in the parish of Tarves, then occupied by a well-known minister of the Secession Church. The supper, which consisted of sowens and milk, was set down before the commencement of family worship. While the worship was being proceeded with, the cat got upon the table and began to lap the milk, which disconcerted the minister, who every now and then stopped in the prayer and cried, "*hish, cat*," but to no purpose. The pedlar, who was very hungry, imagining from the minister's anxiety that matters were becoming serious, took up his ellwand and, giving the cat a smart stroke on the nose, said aloud to the minister, "that's worth a score o' your 'hish cats,' sir."

Another anecdote was told me of a Highland pedlar who used to take up his quarters at the Manse of Alves, about seven miles from Elgin, generally making his appearance on a Saturday evening, and leaving on the Monday morning following. Mr. M'Bean, the minister, was a good man, but somewhat vain of his preaching powers.

The pedlar at the commencement of his visits used to attend the parish church, but he soon ceased to do so, going to hear a seceding minister at Elgin, and returning to the manse in the evening. Mr. M'Bean was in consequence hurt at the want of appreciation of his pulpit services, and asked his guest one day why, while he lived in his house and enjoyed his hospitality, he did not as at first attend on his ministrations, enquiring what fault he had to find with his preaching, and what was the attraction in the Elgin minister which induced him to travel so far to hear him. "Oh," said Donald, "yon's a gran' minister, sir, a terrible gran' minister. Fan *ye* speak o' the evil one ye ca' him the Teevil, jist's gin ye war fear't at him; but yon man ca's him the Divvel, an he disna care a pawpee for him."

Funeral Usages.

When I came to this parish, and for a considerable time afterwards, the corpse, immediately after death, was laid on a table, two lighted candles were set beside it, and a plate with salt upon it. Some of the relations or neighbours sat up in the apartment, where the corpse lay, the whole of each night till the day of interment, and the parties relieved one another till that took place. On the occasion of the lyke-wake, a portion of the Bible was generally read and psalms were sung, and, as there were refreshments both in meat and drink, it not unfrequently happened, when the watchers were not religiously disposed, that the decorum

proper on such occasions was not observed. It was not considered respectful to the memory of a deceased friend if a quantity of strong drink was not consumed at his funeral—a mark of respect which was often too faithfully paid to him. In consequence the guests frequently became intoxicated. I never saw a case of intoxication at a funeral ; from what follows, however, it will be seen that a supply of strong drink was offered sufficient to exhilarate, if not to intoxicate, those who partook of all that was offered them. After one funeral, conducted on these old-fashioned principles, one of the guests said to the others, "Weel, sirs, this is the cantiest funeral we've had for a lang time." I well remember the first funeral which I attended in this parish upwards of fifty years ago. I was told that the hour of meeting was eleven, and, being unacquainted with the customs, I arrived punctually at that hour. When I went to the place I learned that the guests were to meet in the barn, on entering which, a glass of whisky was offered to me before I took my seat. The seats consisted of deals, supported by turf or blocks of wood, running along the walls, all round the barn. There was a deal table in the middle, upon which were placed one plate filled with clay pipes, and another with coarse tobacco shred down and ready for use, and a candle burning for lighting the pipes. This candle, and the light admitted by the door, were the only means by which the apartment was lighted. The guests came straggling in for about an hour, and, as each entered,

whisky was presented to him ; and, as he passed by the table, he took up a pipe, filled it up from the cut tobacco, lighted it at the candle, took his seat, and began to smoke. When the guests were all assembled, two men came in, one with a corn sieve containing oat cakes and cheese ; the other with a pailful of small beer in the one hand, and a drinking jug in the other. All having partaken of this refreshment, the smoking was begun again with renewed vigour. About half an hour later, a glass of whisky and a piece of plain biscuit were presented, and partaken of by every guest. After this the smoking recommenced and continued till another service was brought in and partaken of, consisting of a glass of rum, and a better description of biscuit called bun ; and lastly a glass of wine, with what used to be termed sugar biscuits. Up to this time little was spoken, but after this last service many of the guests became loquacious, and, forgetting the solemnity of the occasion, talked as gaily as if it were a baptism or marriage feast. I remember a conversation between two old men of the following tenor. After having filled his pipe, one said to the other, " A' thing's terrible dear now-a-days, Sanners ; its an unco little smite o' tobacco that ye get noo for a bawbee ; I've seen fan ye wad hae gotten a piece for a bawbee as lang's a fup tow," *i.e.*, a whip lash. " But fat was the maetter," said his neighbour, " fou muckle ye got for a bawbee, gin ye had na the bawbee to buy't wi'." After the lapse of a short period one of the people having charge came in

and invited any of the company, who wished it, to go and see the corpse before the coffin lid was screwed down. A portion of the guests went accordingly; and, when all was ready, the nearest relations, male and female, carried the bier for a few paces, and then consigned it to others, the company relieving one another till they reached the grave. It was melancholy to witness the contrast between the sorrow and anguish of nearest and dearest relatives, and the apathy and exuberant spirits manifested by many of the guests through the exhilarating influence of the funeral refreshments. I never went to a funeral again till a short time before the body was lifted. Such were the usages in times past, but at present, and for a long time bygone, funerals here have been conducted with great propriety.

Drinking usages at funerals existed in a neighbouring parish longer than anywhere else in this quarter, and the late minister, in consequence, soon after his settlement, with the view of establishing a more seemly order of things, called a meeting of his parishioners, and induced them to frame salutary regulations on the subject for future observance. The chief of these were that the minister should always receive an invitation to be present, and that the refreshments offered to the company should be limited to a single glass of spirits to each person. These regulations were, as might be supposed, distasteful to some of the parishioners who hankered after the orgies of former days; and one old well-

known character in the district was said to have given it as his opinion that "a funeral wasna worth gaun till now-a-days." They were, however, I believe, strictly observed, except on one occasion, when a floater of wood on the Dee, whose wife, Nanny Skene, had died, thinking it disrespectful to her memory that the moderation elsewhere practised should be observed at her funeral, resolved to exercise a more abundant hospitality, and to relieve himself of the restraint of the minister's presence by not inviting him. The minister, however, on hearing what was proposed, went uninvited. After offering the company one glass of spirits each, which was the quantity allowed, the husband came several times in succession into the place of meeting, with a glass and a large old-fashioned bottle with whisky in it, under his arm, and, after having set the guests an example by quaffing off a glass himself, vainly by all the arguments he could use, attempted to make the others do the same, and, as the last and strongest inducement he could think of, he said, "O, lads, tak' jist ae ither gless, it's nae ilka day that Nanny Skene dees."

Resurrectionists.

Until provision was made by Parliament for procuring subjects for dissection, students of medicine, or others hired by them, were in the habit of exhuming bodies from the retired and peaceful churchyards in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen.

This was so abhorrent to the people's feelings, that they used every possible means for its prevention. Watch-houses were erected in some of the churchyards; and fire-arms and other weapons were used in protecting from disturbance by the resurrectionists, as the students were called, the remains of deceased relatives and dear friends. Students of medicine were frequently shot at by the watchers, and one of them was said to have been so severely wounded that he died soon after he was carried home. Cases of disinterment from churchyards are now unknown.

A story is told of the disinterment of an old woman in the churchyard of Drumoak which had escaped the vigilance of her relatives. It was suspected soon after her funeral that the grave had been disturbed, and the neighbours resolved to go to the churchyard along with the husband of the deceased to ascertain the truth of the conjecture. While the others were opening the grave, the husband sat upon an adjoining gravestone, holding his walking-staff with both hands, and resting his chin on its head, apparently taking no interest whatever in what was going on. When the diggers at last came to the bottom of the grave, they cried out to the husband, "John, she's nae here; come an' sactisfy yoursel'." John went with apparent reluctance, and, on looking into the grave, said, with great coolness, "Fient a stime o' her see I; but I ken ae thing, I pat her into the grun' ance, and they'll look wi' clear een that'll see

me pit her in again." The following is another *grave* incident, but of a somewhat different aspect, which occurred at a funeral in the churchyard of Kinneff, at which Dr. Mearns, the minister of the parish, was present. The deceased was a second wife, who was carried to the grave by her husband, along with others, on a very hot summer day. The husband likewise assisted in lowering the coffin into the grave. At length he became completely overcome with the heat, and, taking off his hat and out his handkerchief to wipe off the perspiration from his head and face, he said to the bystanders, "Fan I buried my last wife I was like to be smored wi' sna,' and this time I'm like to be plotted wi' heat; but gin I hae this job to dee again I dinna think but I'll treat mysel' to a hearse."

Manners, Habits, and Condition of the Peasantry.

At the beginning of this century, and during the ministry of my father in the adjoining parish of Maryculter, the customs of the middle and poorer classes had a very patriarchal aspect. The larger farmers were surrounded by a number of cottars in proportion to the size of their farms. These cottars seldom held any land themselves, but had cottages rent free, grass for a cow, the privilege of digging potatoes in the farmer's potato field, and other perquisites, for which they and their wives and families gave the farmer a certain amount of work, espe-

cially in the busy seasons of seed time and harvest. The farmers had also regularly engaged servants, who, when married, had houses, and whose wives and families were also required to do farm work when necessary.

The female servants at that time, in all but the wealthier families, were engaged, in addition to their ordinary household work, to spin wool or flax, or to knit stockings during their spare time; and, before the introduction of machinery, more was frequently made in this way to their masters or mistresses than the amount of their wages. A task was assigned to them called a "stent," which they had to finish before night, and most of them sang songs and ballads during its performance. It was by the same sort of work that many of the old women in poor circumstances made a livelihood. The wool to be spun and made into stockings was given out by the hosiers of Aberdeen in different parts of the parish on certain days, called factory days, on which also the wrought stockings were received. Spinning and stocking-knitting seem, however, to have been an unhealthy employment for those who were constantly engaged in it, and it practically came to an end when the work came to be performed by machinery. The prices now paid by the manufacturers for knitting stockings are so small that an old woman can earn only a few pence, by diligent labour, during a whole week. The linen and woollen thread spun by the women, and intended for home use, was sent to what were called

the "customer weavers" in the neighbourhood, to be made into clothing for the family.

At the period I have referred to, the houses, furniture, and mode of living of the small farmers, cottars, tradesmen, and farm servants were, with few exceptions, greatly inferior to what they now are. The houses were generally built of rough stones and clay, and thatched with turf, with straw over it fastened down with straw ropes, and consisted of three apartments, a "but," a "ben," and a "midroom." The "but," or kitchen part of the house, was divided from the midroom by a wooden cupboard or press attached to what was called a box-bed, which was made of wood and was shut up with doors or "bed-lids" during the day. These two pieces of furniture extended along the side of the apartment opposite the fire-place, a small space being left for the entrance, which had sometimes a door and sometimes not. The floor was commonly of clay. The "ben end" was divided much in the same way, but was generally better finished, having a wooden floor and a door. The midroom was the space between the "but" and the "ben," and was formed by the backs of the beds and presses of these apartments. It was sometimes fitted up as a sleeping room, and sometimes used only for holding lumber. The chairs and tables in the ben room were made of home timber, sometimes painted. The male servants and elder males of the family slept in the stable. With few exceptions, there was not a carpet in any house in this parish fifty years

ago. In a great many families, butchers' meat was seldom used from one end of the year to the other. An able-bodied man, a labourer, and an excellent workman, told me that during the first five years after his marriage neither butchers' meat nor tea was within his door. The wages of labourers are about three times as high as they were at the period I have referred to; and the same may be said of the wages of farm servants. It may be readily imagined what frugality, economy, and industry were required to bring up a family upon such slender means. The ordinary paupers on the roll received from our Kirk-Session funds before the introduction of the poor's rates, the higher class, ten, and the lower, eight shillings a quarter; what was further necessary for their support was partially supplied by the earnings of the females, in knitting stockings and spinning, but principally through the benevolence of kind neighbours, whose liberality and sympathy were greatly diminished after the introduction of the poor's rates. I perceive from our Kirk Session Records that, in the year 1845, the whole sum distributed among the poor amounted to £253 14s. 3d. There were no expenses of management. The population of the parish was then about 3000. The sum raised by assessment for the maintenance of the poor, including the expenses of management, amounted last year, the population being nearly the same as at the former period, to £800.

Much of what I have said is applicable only to

parishes like my own, where the farms were small. Since that time a great part of the crofts and small farms have been converted into larger ones; no such thing is now to be seen as the cottar holding of old, and most of the humble cottages of the poor were thrown down as the inmates died out. Notwithstanding the plainness of the mode of living and dressing in those times, the people were as happy and contented as they are now. They were exemplary in their attendance on the ordinances of religion; and though, as I have already said, generally very imperfectly educated, most of them had a firm hold and understanding of the leading truths of the Gospel, which exhibited their influence on their lives.

Drunkenness.

Drunkenness is the greatest curse with which our country is afflicted. It is slaying its thousands, and tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands. Its blighting effects upon soul and body are unspeakable. The quantity of ardent spirits sold in Scotland is immense, and, it is to be feared, not decreasing; and the number of public-houses in which it is consumed is not perceptibly diminishing. The immorality of drunkenness in the country is alas! keeping pace with the quantity of spirits consumed. The ruin of domestic comfort and happiness, Godless upbringing of children, wife-beating, theft, and murder, are the natural consequences which are faithfully chronicled in the columns of the daily

press. These facts call for far more effectual intervention on the part of the legislature than has been hitherto adopted. Well regulated hotels and inns for the convenience and accommodation of the rich cannot be dispensed with, any more than suitable comforts for the poor. But if it is found that spirituous liquors are consumed by rich or poor under legal sanction in such a manner as to produce injurious effects upon the peace and good order of society, and that there is an increase of sins and crimes sufficient to bring down the judgments of God upon the nation, such a state of things calls for a sharp remedy. If spirits were consumed at home, the consequences would be of a hundred fold less magnitude. In public-houses there are many decoys and temptations to intemperance without any home influences to check the evil.

When I came to this parish, upwards of fifty-five years ago, there were in the district, excluding Portlethen, six public-houses, only about a thousand inhabitants, and no village, so that our public-houses were got up as well for decoying strangers as for the alleged purpose of accommodating our own people. About thirty years ago they were all put down save one. That place was a nuisance and a curse for a long time. Now, porter only is sold in it, and I am not aware of any drunkard in the parish, and I hear of no one who regrets the want of a public-house for the sale of spirits. People who are addicted to the immoderate use of spirits are, at first, very unwilling to acknowledge the sin or shame of the habit.

They set up all their real or imaginary good qualities as make-weights against this sin, and exaggerate their neighbours' sins and failings in mitigation of their own; but after a time they become quite demoralised and reckless. It does not seem, however, to be incumbent upon those, who enjoy God's gifts in moderation, to abstain from the use of them because of their abuse by others. It is part of our probation to use God's gifts without abusing them, and to show the strength of our religious principles by the moderate use of what is sanctioned in God's Word. The following is an instance of a good quality or virtue being set off against the sin of drunkenness:—A servant girl, belonging to this parish, on her way into Aberdeen with milk, saw a woman, whom she knew, lying on her back in the ditch by the roadside very drunk and unable to rise. The girl lifted her up, and said it was shameful to see a married woman, and the mother of a family, in such a deplorable condition. The woman, in nowise abashed, replied, "Ah, lassie, haud yer tongue, haud yer tongue. Fat ken ye aboot the like o' that? I had a perfect wumman to my midder, and I'm a perfect wumman mysel'." Her argument seems to have been that the virtue of chastity, possessed by herself and her mother before her, covered the sin of getting drunk. I remember having heard, many years ago, of a rejoinder to a somewhat similar effect, which was given by a fisherwoman to Miss Leslie, the daughter of a former minister of Fordoun, a very lively young woman who generally found something

to amuse her in her intercourse with the people who came to the manse. The woman, from whom Miss Leslie was buying fish, at first asked double the price for which she at last agreed to sell the fish, assuring the lady that she had paid that sum for them herself. After the bargain had been concluded at the lower price, Miss Leslie said to the woman, "O, Nelly, was it not a great sin of you to tell sic' a lee about the fish?" "O," said Nelly, "ye ken, Miss Grace, a'body lees, but can ye tell me onything *that ever I stealt?*"

The complacency with which people often view their own besetting sins is illustrated by the following anecdote of ancient date, which is told of a parishioner of Insch, during the ministry of Mr. Mearns, an ancestor of the present minister of Kinneff. A farmer's wife, one of his parishioners, came to the minister one day and said, "Sir, I wish ye wad speak to my 'man' (husband), he's as good a 'man' as a womun cu'd hae when he's sober; but he's gey an' aften fou, and then he's unco' fashious; I wish ye wad speak to him." This the minister promised to do. A short time afterwards he saw the farmer watering his cattle at the watering place before the door, and said to him, "Ye're waterin' the cattle, John?" "I am so," said John. "Weel," said the minister, "take ye a lesson fae the cattle, John. Fan they drink, they drink naething mair that what's good for them. But I hear when ye gang oot about, ye tak' mair drink than's good for you, and come home drunk, an' vex an' ill-guide

your wife, an' set a very bad example to your family. Tak' a lesson fae the cattle, John, an' never drink mair than's good for you." To which John replied, "That may be a' verra weel, sir, but ye see, sir, they're nowt, but I'm nae a nowt; an', bless your heart, sir, fat ken they aboot *camaraderie*" (good fellowship).

The following is an anecdote of a Banffshire laird of the old school, who spoke the Doric of his county in great perfection. Although not an intemperate man, he always liked to drink something stronger than water. When seized with his last illness he sent for his family physician, who pronounced his complaint to be water in the chest, whereupon the laird exclaimed in great astonishment, "Watter in my kist! watter in my kist! fat wye can that be? I haena drunk a drap o't this thirty year."

Smuggling and Excise Officers.

Within my memory, I may say that almost all the whisky used in this country was illicitly distilled; it was used by minister and dominie, by laird and tenant; in short, by gentle and simple. There were such vexatious restrictions upon the legal distillation of it, that, when so made, it was neither wholesome nor palatable. This evasion of the Excise laws excited the greatest vigilance on the part of the excisemen, who, whatever might be their excellence of character, were unpopular in the country as a general rule. The public antipathy

was shown by such satyrical productions as the following:—

The deil cam' fiddlin' thro' the toun
And danced awa' wi' the exciseman,
An' ilka wife cried "auld Mahoun
We wish ye luck o' your prize man.
There's three-some reels, and four-some reels,
There's hornpipes and strathspeys, man;
But the ae best dance e'er cam' to our lan'
Was the deil's awa' wi' the exciseman."

Great ingenuity was consequently used by the excisemen in the detection of the smugglers, and every means possible was employed by the smugglers to evade the excisemen. Pitched battles were sometimes fought between them, which resulted in fatal consequences. The occupation of the smuggler was of a most demoralizing character, and that of the exciseman tended to harshness and severity.

There was an exciseman at Skene of the name of Gillespie, who for many years was a terror to the smugglers, and who had been famous for the number of seizures which he had made. He carried horse pistols, and a fierce dog attended and aided him. His zeal and success were highly valued by the Board of Excise. But to the great joy of all the smugglers, and many whisky drinkers, in the country, he committed forgery, and was tried and hanged at Aberdeen, when many of his enemies came long distances to see the execution. Soon after this, the old excise laws were abolished, and new

laws re-enacted, which enabled fair dealers to brew the good, wholesome, and palatable whisky now in use, and put an end to the illicit brewing of it.

Education and Training at Home.

I cannot avoid touching upon a subject of vital and general importance—a subject, too, which cannot be reached by any legislative enactments, or by any influence from without. It is a matter of such general interest that the happiness of individuals, of families, and even of communities, depends upon it. I allude to the mismanagement of children, in early years, by their parents, and to the continual habit some parents have of yielding, in whole or in part, to the wishes of the child, until all control over it is lost, and its sense of moral obligation to obey the authority of its parents is gradually rooted out.

The difficulty of inculcating and fostering this all-important habit of obedience in the child arises from the contention between the head and heart of the parent. An infant early gives evidence of the tender affection of its heart, and of the bent and strength of its will, and hence at this early stage it becomes the imperative duty of parents to train the child to such habits, and inculcate in it such principles, as shall tend to promote its happiness and success in life.

A trial of strength soon begins,—resistance on the part of the child, and yielding on the part of the parent. Reason urges the latter to do what is

right, but his sympathetic nature leads him to yield to the wishes of the child, even though it desires what may be for its hurt.

The consequences of this leniency on the part of the parent appear in most families in the form of disobedience, forwardness, sulkiness, quarrelling with brothers and sisters, rudeness to servants, and the like. The parent, after long yielding, has to give up the struggle, and the child becomes the master. Though unwilling at first to believe his authority really lost, the parent has at last to confess that he is bound, as it were, with *withs;* that the child has become self-willed, considering in short nothing save its own pleasure. As the child advances in life, the effects of this ill-judged indulgence, although, perhaps, not uniform in all cases, cause it to rebel against the authority, not only of its parents, but also of its teachers, and of all who have a right to exercise control over it. In the world this evil is not unfrequently the cause of the strifes that arise between neighbours, and, consequently, severs the bond of mutual friendship that ought to exist between man and man.

In my experience I have seen so much evil resulting from it, that I cannot help warning parents of the mistake they commit in thus giving to the child what it has no right to possess, and what, instead of tending to its happiness, in all cases tends to make it dissatisfied with itself, and with those with whom it comes in contact.

State of Education about Half a Century ago, and its Present Improvements.

In the year 1826, when I came to this parish, and for several years afterwards, the schools in this district were in a state of wretched inefficiency. There were six parish schools on Deeside, within the bounds of the Presbytery of Aberdeen, which I was in the habit of visiting annually as one of a committee of Presbytery appointed for the district. Most, if not all, of the teachers had been educated at the Aberdeen Universities, but they certainly were not of the *elite* of the alumni. At the time I speak of, there was no reading book for the more advanced classes but the Bible; none for the younger classes but selections from the Book of Proverbs; and none for the beginners but the alphabet, and syllables of two or three letters, printed on an outer leaf of the Shorter Catechism. In all of the schools writing was taught, and a little arithmetic. The Shorter Catechism was also taught, without apparently any means having been used to render any part of it intelligible. There was no examination on the meaning of the words, or on the substance of any of the lessons, and it would seem that the parents did not appreciate any such mode of teaching when it was attempted, as I am informed by my friend, Mr. Alexander Cruickshank, that when his father, the late Professor Cruickshank, who was schoolmaster of Boharm in 1810, introduced teaching according to the intellectual method, he was found

fault with by the parents for bothering their children by trying to make them understand the meanings of words, and the substance of what they read. The reading, at the time I speak of, was without taste or intelligence, and it was wonderful how little the pupils understood of anything they read. As a sample of the spelling, I may mention that I heard my predecessor, Dr. Morison, dictate a simple verse of the Bible in three of the schools, promising a shilling to every boy and girl who could write it without an error in spelling, but in none of the schools had he to pay a single shilling.

I cannot do otherwise than speak disparagingly of the system of education pursued in my younger days, but to the general rule there were honourable exceptions. Not a few of the teachers in those times prepared pupils for the Aberdeen Universities in a way that was very creditable to them, though the standard for the bursary competition was not nearly so high, nor the range of subjects for examination so extensive, as they are at present. It cannot, however, be said of the teachers in the earlier period of which I have made mention that they failed in their love to their pupils by sparing the rod. If the pupils did not get much learning, they got often more than enough of punishment. There used to be smooth flat stones in the schools, upon which they were set to cool after being whipt. Within my memory there was one of these stones in the School of Dunnottar, and another in that of Fraserburgh.

A former schoolmaster of Dunnottar, Mr. Dawson, whom I remember, was an original. A friend of mine, who was once present at a presbyterial examination of his school, told me that, when the examiners thought that the business was at an end, Dawson said, "but I have ae Laetin scholar; he is in the rudiments, and as far over as the pronoun *hic, hæc, hoc.*" "Come up Jock, an' say your lesson; begin, What's the nominative?" The boy said nothing, but Dawson bawled out, "*hic, hæc, hoc,*" which the boy repeated in a squeaky voice; "Vara well," said Dawson, so it went on from the nominative singular to the ablative plural, the boy always repeating the cases after the master in the same squeaky tone; and the master ending with the commendation, "Vara well." Dawson then said to the visitors, "This, gentlemen, is the only Laetin scholar that I have at my school." Dawson pronounced the word *do* as he did *so*, and gave as his reason, if *s-o* be *so*, why should not *d-o* be *do*. He once quarrelled with one of his neighbours, and after a scuffle Dawson, who proved the stronger of the two, got his adversary over his knee and began to castigate him, which made the other bawl out so loudly that one of the neighbours came in to see what was the matter. On seeing how he was engaged he cried, "Oh, Mr. Dawson, what are you doing?" to which Dawson replied with the greatest coolness, and without heeding the interruption, "Don't you see what *I'm doe-ing?*"

Dawson, who was a preacher, was chaplain to a corps of volunteers which had been raised in the

district, in the prospect of the French invasion at the beginning of this century. On an occasion of the assembling of the corps for consecrating the colours, Dawson was asked to pray, and in the course of his prayer he hesitated, and at last stopped. A party of the officers afterwards dined at Fetteresso Castle, and Mr. Dawson was likewise present. After the wine had circulated freely, Mr. Dawson, among others, was asked to sing, which he did very readily and very well. When he ended, General Hay said to him, "Mr. Dawson, you sing better than you pray." "Vara likely, General," said Dawson, "perhaps I have sung oftener than I have prayed."

Although the cooling stones were almost in desuetude in Dawson's time, the *tards* was kept in active operation for a long time afterwards. A co-presbyter of mine, still alive and far advanced in life, mentioned to me that, after having got a smattering of Latin at a country school, it was resolved that he should be sent to the Grammar School of Aberdeen, and his former teacher gave him an introduction to Mr. Nicol, one of the masters of that institution. Mr. Nicol, who was then teaching the second class, received him very kindly, and took him to the school and placed him in his own desk, saying to him (he always spoke Scotch), "Now my young man, you'll see how we come on, and, if ye think ye can keep up wi' us, ye'll come to this class; and if ye canna, ye'll jist gang into the first class." The business of the day then began, and everything went on very pleasantly for a while; but

in consequence of some offence given, my friend did not know what it was, Nicol made six of the boys leave their seats and stand up in a line on the floor to be flogged. He then gave them the word of command to adjust their garments for the operation, which they did without the master putting a finger upon them. He then walked up and down the floor and administered the castigation to his heart's content. After the class was dismissed he said to my friend, "Weel, my man, do ye think that ye could go on with us?" The boy, although believing that he could have easily gone on with them, was so terrified that he replied, "I would rather go into the first class," which he did, and in consequence lost a year of his time.

In those days, when a flogging was administered in the Grammar School, the porter was generally sent for to assist, which he did by taking the sufferer on his back. The porter at that time was a little old man named William Michie, with short legs in proportion to his body, a broad countenance, and a yellow wig. A story is told of his having been sent for to assist at the flogging of an obstreperous boy who had a great dislike to the business. After the boy had been at last hoisted on William's back, and the punishment was about to be administered, when he could think of no other protection, he took William's wig and clapped it upon the part of his body that was specially to suffer, to the great amusement and edification of all the beholders.

A story was told me by the late excellent and learned Dr. Bisset, of Bourtie, of the views of school discipline held by one of his elders, a very simple and illiterate man, who had been ordained an elder late in life. He fancied that it was a special duty of an elder to examine the parish school, and he did so occasionally alone. He generally asked the boys questions from the Shorter Catechism, and, when a boy gave a correct answer, he used to say, "Weel, tak' ye tent to that, my cockie." One day, on his leaving the school, he said to the teacher, "Gueed day to you, Maester Stott, ye're deein' fine; keep a bra' ticht bridle-han' o' them, man, and be aye chappin tee ahin'."

In the time I speak of, the younger children in a parish were taught by elderly women not very well qualified for the business, but if they did not teach well most of them did not fail in the exercise of discipline. A late elder of this parish was at one of these schools when he was very young, and used to give a very humorous account of his mistress somewhat in the following terms:—"Fan I was young, maist o' the bairns near my father's were sent to a school taught by a wifie o' the name o' May Gallow. At that time we used to wear kilts till we were about seven years old. May was a terrible wicked creatur', an' as lang's we had on the kilts she managed's fine an' payt's pretty, but aefter we got on the breeks she could na win at's, an' we were sent to the maister's."

Mr. Wood, of the Sessional School in Edinburgh,

first introduced what was called the intellectual system, which took the whole country by surprise, and looked like some discovery that had fallen down from heaven. This intellectual system made little way in these northern districts till the Dick Bequest, with its rules and superintendence, was introduced into Aberdeenshire and the adjoining counties of Banff and Moray. The Dick Trustees resolved that the benefits of their bequest should not be conferred upon any school which was not visited by their inspector, and whose teacher would not adopt their educational improvements. Those teachers—not a few in number—who were sensible of their own deficiencies, and, being wedded to their old ways, were prejudiced against all innovations, whether improvements or not, chose rather to forego the benefits of the bequest than admit the Dick Inspector into their schools. Moreover, a great proportion of the clergy strongly remonstrated against such inspection of the parish schools as an infringement of a prerogative which, as they thought, belonged to themselves alone. The trustees insisted also upon examining all newly-appointed teachers before allowing them to participate in the bequest. As these teachers had been previously examined and found qualified by the presbyteries this was an additional objection, as being an interference with the constitutional rights of presbyteries. These obstacles to the execution of the regulations framed by the trustees would probably have been insuperable, for a time at least, had the trustees not had

for their inspector and adviser one man among a thousand, Mr. Allan Menzies, W.S., Edinburgh, a man of great firmness and prudence, a highly accomplished scholar, and thoroughly acquainted with the business of education. He was, moreover, strongly impressed with the deficiencies of the existing system of education, and devised the only feasible remedy. He persevered amidst all discouragements, overcame all opposition, and his efforts were at last followed by triumphant success. Those who knew what was the state of education when the bequest came into operation, and to what perfection it was raised by his exertions, will acknowledge that he was one of the greatest benefactors, directly and indirectly, to the three counties interested in the bequest. The great addition made from the bequest to the schoolmasters' emoluments has secured a more highly educated class of teachers, most of them the *elite* of our University graduates ; while the examination of the teachers, and the inspection of the schools by the inspector appointed by the trustees, have raised the parish schools in these counties to a very high standard of perfection. They have proved models to those in the surrounding districts, and have shown our English neighbours what our Scotch system can accomplish. It does not lie within the scope of my little work to enter more particularly into this subject, but what I have said may suffice to show the influence of the Dick Bequest within the last 40 years upon the education, intelligence, habits, manners, and material

prosperity of the people. One effect of the raising of the standard of education was that the pupils of the old school of teachers were much less successful than formerly at the College bursary competitions, and this failure the teachers were disposed to attribute to any other cause than their own inefficiency. The ideas of parents also had undergone a change in regard to the exercise of discipline, and they resented the severity of the punishment inflicted in the course of their sons learning Latin. A friend of mine overheard two of these old-fashioned teachers endeavouring to account for the fact that their pupils could not gain bursaries as formerly :—Said the one, "Fat wye do ye teach Laetin, I canna teach't now?" "Neither can I," said the other, "I think it's because the boys' boddoms winna bear beatin' as they used to dee."

It would be unpardonable in me to pass over this subject without any reference to what is called the "Milne Bequest," of which I have been a Trustee from the period of its establishment in 1846. I shall refer to it however as briefly as possible.

A sum of money, amounting to nearly fifty thousand pounds, was bequeathed by the late Dr. Milne of Bombay, who was a native of Aberdeen, for the double purpose of benefiting the parish schoolmasters in Aberdeenshire, and educating poor children within the county. The funds were directed to be distributed among the most deserving parish schoolmasters in the county, each of whom was to receive twenty pounds a-year, on condition of his

educating twenty-five poor children without fee. It was made a condition that the teachers should be selected as participants in the Bequest by Dr. Milne's Trustees, and that the children should be nominated by the kirk sessions of their respective parishes.

The Inspector appointed by the Trustees is required to visit the selected and eligible schools, and to classify them according to merit; and the selection is made mainly according to the qualifications of the teachers, regard being likewise had to the population of the parishes, and to the attendance at the schools. The children nominated are entitled to be instructed in all the branches taught at the school which they attend, and to remain at school as long as they choose. In consequence of these advantages, not a few of them are fitted to enter the University, gain bursaries, go through the whole of the University curriculum, and enter into some of the learned professions. Some of them also have succeeded in taking a share of the coveted appointments in the Indian Civil Service and elsewhere. I could point out more than one individual, who, originally educated at a country parish school by means of the Milne Bequest, became Senior Wranglers at Cambridge. Many others have risen far above their original sphere in life through the instrumentality of this excellent bequest. Last year eighty-five schoolmasters were benefited by it; and, as each teacher is required to instruct an average of twenty-five pupils during the year, the number entitled to be taught

was 2125. The actual number, however, was considerably larger, as many of the teachers instruct considerably more than the number required. In consequence of the endowments I have mentioned, along with the Government grants, the parish schools in Aberdeenshire are objects of ambition to many of the best of our University graduates, and hence, agreeably to their original foundation, they are not merely institutions for the poorer classes, but, along with them, for all in a parish who desire to avail themselves of this cheap, convenient, and excellent means of education for their children.

Aberdeen Universities—Past and Present.

Till about twenty years ago there were two Universities and Colleges connected with Aberdeen, the one situated in the old, and the other in the new town of Aberdeen, called respectively the King's and Marischal Colleges. As it was at the former of these that I was educated, and as my father was also educated and was Professor of Natural Philosophy there from 1811 till his death in 1834, I shall make the contrast between the past of that College with the existing University of Aberdeen. From the nature and size of this little work it is only the most meagre sketch of the subject which I can give, but even this may afford some interest to my readers.

Till about the time of my father's entry upon his duties as Professor of Natural Philosophy, in Session

1811-12, the branches of Mathematics and Natural and Moral Philosophy were not respectively set apart, as at present, to Professors specially appointed to teach them. There were three Professors of Philosophy, as they were called, each of whom in turn took up the second class of the year, and carried it on through its 2nd, 3rd, and 4th years, teaching it during its second year Mathematics, during its third year Higher Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and during its fourth year Moral Philosophy. When the system was changed, each of these Professors was appointed to teach the students of one year only; the Professor who taught the second year's students confining himself to Elementary Mathematics; the Professor of the third year taught Higher Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; and the Professor of the fourth year Moral Philosophy only.

The staff of Professors in the Arts Classes then was—

1. A Professor of Greek.
2. A Professor of Mathematics.
3. A Professor of Natural Philosophy.
4. A Professor of Moral Philosophy.

There was also a class of Humanity, but, as it was not compulsory at that time, it was very ill attended. The then professor, Mr. Ogilvy, was said to have been a very accomplished man, of great taste, and a very elegant translator of the Latin Poets. Being in weak health, he was very irregular in his attendance, and it may, therefore, be inferred

that that of his pupils was not very punctual. One year, I believe, the class was not taught at all. He was succeeded in 1815 by Dr. Patrick Forbes, a distinguished scholar and a very efficient teacher, who likewise taught successfully the Chemistry Class.

The students had very seldom any knowledge of Greek when they entered College, and the instruction they received in that subject was therefore purely elementary. Those of them who were attentive to their studies, under Professor Macpherson, made great progress in the time and circumstances. There was a second Greek Class for students of the second year. Upon the whole there was then as much taught in every class as served the students for an introduction to the various subjects, and if they did not learn much, "they thought the more," and there were those, comparatively few in number indeed, who afterwards distinguished themselves highly in Literature, Theology, Philosophy, and Science, though they had not nearly the advantages possessed by their successors of the present day.

The Theological department was common to both King's and Marischal Colleges, each having a Professor of Divinity and a Professor of Hebrew. The students were obliged to attend both Theological Professors, among whom there were some great and learned men, such, in King's College, as Drs. Alexander and Gilbert Gerard, and Dr. Duncan Mearns; and, in Marischal College, such as Principal Campbell, Principal Brown, and Dr.

Black. When the regulations of the Church were altered, more attention was paid to Hebrew, but even now the study of Hebrew in our Church, except in so far as the pass examination for license is concerned, is far from being very profound.

When I was at college the Professorships of Law and Medicine were sinecures, although there were emoluments attached to both.

The Union of the Universities.

The following is a list of the present Chairs :—

Faculty of Arts.

Greek,	Professor,	1 ;	Assistant,	1.
English and Logic,	,,	1.		
Latin,	,,	1 ;	,,	1.
Mathematics,	,,	1 ;	,,	1.
Natural Philosophy,	,,	1 ;	,,	1.
Moral Philosophy,	,,	1.		
Natural History,	,,	1.		
	,,	7	,,	4

Faculty of Divinity.

Systematic Divinity,	Professor,	1.
Oriental Languages,	,,	1.
Church History,	,,	1.
Biblical Criticism,	,,	1.
	,,	4

Faculty of Law.

Conveyancing,	Professor,	1 ;	Assistant,	1.
Medical Jurisprudence,	,,	1.		
	,,	2		1.

Faculty of Medicine.

Anatomy,	Professor,	1 ;	Assistant,	1.
Chemistry,	,,	1 ;	,,	1.
Institutes of Medicine,	,,	1.		
Surgery,	,,	1.		
Practice of Medicine,	,,	1.		
Midwifery,	,,	1.		
Zoology, with Comparative Anatomy,	,,	1.		
Medical Jurisprudence,	,,	1 ;	,,	1.
Materia Medica,	,,	1 ;	,,	1.
Botany,	,,	1.		
	,,	10	,,	4

To attest the quality of the education now given it is only necessary to advert to the distinction acquired by the Aberdeen students in competition with students of other institutions. I take the liberty of quoting the following from a lecture delivered by Professor Black, of Aberdeen, to his students at the commencement of session 1880-81—"Look first at those public examinations where our students come in contact with students from other institutions. Of these the examinations for the Ferguson Scholarships and for the Civil Service of

India may be taken as representative—the former for special and concentrated, the latter for general and extensive scholarship. Fifty-seven Ferguson Scholarships have been given during the past twenty years, viz.:—three for Classics and Philosophy jointly, all of which have been won by Aberdeen; seventeen for Classics alone, of which we have gained four; seventeen for Philosophy alone, of which we have taken three; and twenty for Mathetics, of which we have carried no fewer than nine. In all nineteen scholarships out of fifty-seven, or one-third of the whole, have fallen to this University, whereas the number of our students would not have warranted us to expect more than one-half of that proportion.

"In the examinations for the Civil Service of India our students seem to have won in the twenty years about twenty-five appointments, but I have no means of comparing these with the successes in the same field of the other Universities. Much has been spoken of the success of our mathematical students at Cambridge, and not without good cause. As far as I can make out, thirteen or fourteen of our best mathematicians have proceeded to Cambridge within the twenty years and gained various distinctions there, including a senior, three second, and two fourth wranglerships, with others farther down the scale. Not one of them whose course is finished has failed to take a high place. While according all possible credit to these, it seems to me that no less honour, comparatively speaking, is due to those

of our students who have won distinction in Classics at one or other of the English Universities. The practice of prosecuting classical studies at Oxford or Cambridge is of much later date among us than in the case of mathematics; in fact, I do not find that it prevailed at all between 1860 and 1870. But since the latter year as many as nine have sought distinction in this way, and, as in the other case, every one of them who has had time to complete his course has taken a first-class position. At Oxford, where most of our classical men go, there is no distinction exactly analogous to the Senior Wranglership at Cambridge. The Honours men are merely arranged in classes, and placed individually in the order of merit. But all our men hitherto have passed in the first class, and with regard to Cambridge I shall be surprised to be told that the position won by Mr. Robert Neil is not comparable even to that of a Senior Wrangler.

"Let us look at the professions. At the Bar promotion is slow, yet the University is beginning to be well represented in that profession. Besides practising barristers, it has such a name to boast of as that of Mr. W. A. Hunter, Professor of Jurisprudence in the University of London. In the Church there are few more distinguished names, among men so young, than those of Professor Robertson Smith, Mr. Whyte of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, and Professor Paterson of the U. P. Theological Hall. It is, however, in the teaching profession that Aberdeen men mostly turn out pre-eminent. Surely it is

no small credit to the University that four of the ten vacancies in the professoriate, which have occurred within the last five years, should have been filled up by the appointment of men who had graduated here since 1860, with the result of giving us a Faculty of Arts entirely of home growth.

"The Professor of Mathematics in the University of Edinburgh, Mr. Chrystal, took his degree here in 1871. Altogether twelve professorships seem to be occupied by *alumni* of the United University.

"I might go on to speak of inspectors of schools, lecturers in Training Colleges, headmasters, and other prominent teachers in various educational institutions, but such an enumeration would perhaps be tedious. Suffice it to say, that our men have proved themselves fit, not merely to pass examinations and win scholarships, but to take an honourable part in the varied business of life."

The lecturer's purpose was limited to a review of the history of the University as now constituted, that is since the Union in 1860. But if he had taken into account the ten years before that event, so as to include in his calculation men who, though still comparatively young, have had time enough to make their mark in life, he would have been able to name not a few whose career has given noble evidence of the valuable education their University has afforded.

Travelling—Past and Present.

Within my recollection only three gentlemen in

Aberdeen, Provost James Hadden of Grandholm Works ; Mr. Crombie of Phesdo ; and Dr. Dingwall Fordyce, advocate, had four-wheeled carriages. The first modern two-wheeled carriage that appeared in Aberdeen, probably about the year 1812, was what was called a Dennet, and belonged to Mr. Ramsay of Barra. The second belonged to Mr. Buchan of Auchmacoy. There was no public conveyance for passengers on any but the Edinburgh road in my early days. The mail coach to Inverness began to be run, I think, about 1812 ; that to Peterhead a few years later, and the coach to Banff about the same time. It was at a much later period that public conveyances began to be run on the Deeside and Skene roads. The existing Edinburgh road was only opened in the beginning of the century. The line of the old road still remains, but is for the most part broken up till within a few miles of the town of Aberdeen. The access by that road from Aberdeen to Edinburgh must have been most tedious and uncomfortable as portions of it are so steep that no vehicles but carts now travel upon it.

All the old roads from the north and west were much in the same condition. The now existing great roads to the north and west were made probably about seventy years ago.

The state of the old roads must have been a great bar to agricultural improvements, and it is easy to conjecture the benefits to agriculture, and to the growth and prosperity of the town of Aberdeen,

which have accrued from the modern facilities of communication. In the old days the cattle had to travel to London and other parts of England on foot, by which they were impoverished to such an extent that they had to be fed for some time on the rich pastures of England, before they could be exposed for sale in the English butcher markets.

Agriculture—The Past and the Present.

Agriculture has reached a high pitch of perfection during the present century. It is in this branch of industry, especially, that the inhabitants of this country have given proofs of their shrewdness and indomitable perseverance. They have achieved marvellous triumphs over a naturally cold climate, and for the most part a rugged and ungenial soil. In 1792, when the old statistical account of Scotland was prepared on the suggestion of that philanthropist, the late Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, in many districts a comparatively small portion of the land was under tillage; and the thorough cultivation of waste land, owing to the amount of drainage which was necessary, both in main and furrow drains, was only accomplished in later times at an enormous cost both of money and labour. From the circumstance that the greater part of the land in Scotland was held under entail, the proprietors had formerly no way of raising money for improving their estates, and hence the reclamation of land had, for the most part, to be done by the tenants themselves under

improving leases. But the results of the tenants' labours were very unsatisfactory, and, where much had to be done in clearing off stones and cutting drains, the work was so imperfectly performed that it had, for the most part, to be done over again. It was not until the landlords, aided by the Government drainage grant, themselves laid their shoulders to the work, that the great results, at present conspicuous, were manifested.

Since the year 1792 the County of Aberdeen has been beautified by great additional plantations of wood; the fields have been laid out and enclosed by substantial fences; and the farm houses and farm steadings have been vastly improved in structure, accommodation, and comfort. By means of the shelter afforded by wood plantations, and the withdrawal of the surface water from the wet land, which, by chilling the atmosphere during a great part of the year, had prevented early tilling, early sowing, and consequently early reaping, the climate has been modified and greatly changed. The soil, moreover, has been so subdued and cheered by the luxury of the home and foreign manures laid upon it that the crops are greatly more abundant in quantity and superior in quality, and the sowing and reaping are not far behind that of the earliest districts in Scotland. The Aberdeenshire farmers are wise men, and recognise and act upon the maxim of Virgil, *justissima tellus*, which may be freely translated "If you don't give the land anything, it will not give you anything." Strangers passing through this

county may still think it bleak and unsightly. It is not, however, a county in which they are likely to starve ; and, if we can satisfy them in no other way, we can do so by contrast, as the Highlander did to the Englishman, who complained of the roughness of Marshal Wade's highland roads, "Had you seen these roads before they were made, you'd have held up your hands and blessed Marshal Wade."

In illustration of what I have said of the great change which has taken place on the face of the County of Aberdeen since the first publication of the Statistical Account of Scotland, I take, for example, the parish of Skene, the eastern boundary of which reaches to within about five miles of the town of Aberdeen. In early life I used not unfrequently to pass through that parish on my way to visit friends in a parish beyond it. I always journeyed on foot, and on my way backwards and forwards generally rested at the manse of Skene. I can scarcely conceive any contrast of the kind more striking than that between the past and present condition of that parish. It is thus described by the minister of the parish in the Statistical Account of it in 1792 :—

"On the lands belonging to the proprietor of Skene only, have trees been hitherto raised. No planting has been done till of late, and even that to no great extent, nor improvements indeed of any kind, owing to invincible obstructions. Considering the great quantity of waste land in the parish, fit only for bearing trees, the neglect of cultivating

them is much to be regretted. Among the disadvantages of the parish are to be numbered its difficulty of improvement (being in general full of rocks, and a considerable part of it wet and spongy), the small progress that agriculture hath hitherto made, and I may add the quantity of moss in the parish." Now are to be seen the barren land cleared of stones and cultivated; the mosses drained, reclaimed, and covered, in the season, with waving crops of yellow corn or other produce; the ground surrounding the beautiful loch fringed with wood or cultivated to the very edge; proprietors' seats erected, and the policies about them tastefully laid out; and no lack of wood in the parish, both profitable and ornamental. It is worth one's while to travel some distance to get such a magnificent view as may be had from the seat of my excellent friend the Laird of Easter Skene, who has done much to the cultivating and beautifying of the district in which he lives. The same thing may be said of many other parishes in the county of Aberdeen, and of none perhaps more truly than my own.

The following is an account of the state of agriculture in the end of last century, in the parish of Tarves, at present one of the richest and best cultivated parishes in Aberdeenshire, taken from the second statistical account of that parish by my late friend Mr. Knox the minister, written in the year 1845:—

"Seventy years ago agriculture in this parish, as

generally throughout the county of Aberdeen, was in a truly wretched condition. The stagnation of water on the low grounds utterly precluded tillage ; while the arable lands were over-run with noxious weeds, and chilled from November to May by innumerable land springs. The cultivated ground was divided into what was called *infield* and *outfield*. The former received all the manure of the farm, and was perpetually in crop. The latter consisted of what was called *rig* and *baulk*, that is, of arable ridges, between every two of which there was an interjacent space termed a *baulk*, which the plough never disturbed. The arable part was cropped five years in succession, and then permitted to lie in pasture for the same number of years to recruit its exhausted powers of production. Green crops, with the exception of a few potatoes and coleworts (" green kail ") in the gardens of the farmers and peasantry, were unknown. The implements of husbandry and the mode of using them were equally rude. Two men, with ten or twelve oxen yoked in a team, barely accomplished the work which one man, with two horses in a plough, can at present perform without difficulty. The horses employed in agriculture were diminutive in size, and used merely for burden, never for draught. They carried out manure, and home peats in paniers or creels, and the meal to be sold was conveyed to market in sacks, laid across the horses' backs. Carts and wheel carriages were only to be found in the possession of landed proprietors."

Perhaps many of my readers have never heard of the old Scotch proverb, "Hantle o' whistlin' an' little red lan'" (ploughed land), which is equivalent to "much labour and little work done," and perhaps some of those who have heard it, and who do know its meaning, do not know its origin. It was usual for the goadsman who drove the team to whistle slow airs, frequently psalm tunes, to the oxen when ploughing. This music, which suited their pace, is said to have stimulated them to work with greater spirit and steadiness than the goad, and when it failed it was said that there was a "hantle o' whistlin' an' little red lan'."

Such was the state of matters in Aberdeenshire and the adjoining counties a century ago, and for some years later. In the year 1792, when the first statistical account was written, things had begun to mend in many parishes, but not in all.

In Tullynessle, for example, where agriculture, in all its branches, is now as well understood as in any parish in Aberdeenshire, it was in a very backward state.

It appears from the statistical account of 1792 that at that date there were no turnips or rye grass seeds sown in the parish, and the Reporter says, "that the condition of the people would be improved, *inter alia*, if the proprietors would furnish them at first with turnip and grass seeds." The ploughing was then done on the small farms by ploughs "drawn by small steers, or sometimes by an intermixture of cows and horses. The larger farms are ploughed by eight or ten small oxen;" and carts

had been introduced only about thirty years before the date of the report.

On the subject of prices, wages, &c., the Reporter says, "It may, without exaggeration, be asserted that prices are double, if not triple, of what they were about thirty years ago. About that time an ox sold at twenty shillings, which now costs at least five pounds; sheep three to four shillings for the best wedders, now the common price is from six shillings to ten and sixpence; two shillings and sixpence to three shillings for the best ewes and lambs, now they fetch from five to seven shillings or more. Hens then sold for threepence, now sixpence; eggs, a penny the fourteen, now twopence the dozen.

The ordinary wages of male farm servants then were five pounds, of females two pounds to two pounds ten shillings a year. The first horseman's wages at a recent feeing (hiring) market in Aberdeen were £17 to £18, a half year, with food in addition, and the second horseman had from £15 to £16 a half year with food.

The ordinary wages given to labourers when hired by the day were 6d.; tailors 5d. or 6d.; wrights 8d.; masons 1s. 2d.; all inclusive of victuals.

On the subject of cattle, the Reporter proceeds:—"The common breed of black cattle in this parish is a middling or rather small sized hardy kind, weighing from eighteen to thirty stone Amsterdam. They improve very much when carried into richer pastures, and consequently bring good prices

from the drovers, who begin to pick them up early in spring, and continue buying through the summer."

As regards rents :—"The best infield land lets, at an average, for about sixteen shillings and eightpence an acre, inferior about ten shillings, and outfield from two and sixpence to five shillings, according to its quality ; but in general the tenants pay in meal, in place of money, for the outfield grounds." Eighteen shillings and sixpence was about the highest price paid for land per acre in Aberdeenshire at the time the first statistical account was published. Many of the farmers of the present day may not be aware that in the earlier part of last century, and in some cases towards the end of it, there were no turnips, potatoes, rye grass, or red clover seeds sown in the county of Aberdeen.

The following extract from Mr. Robertson's excellent survey in Kincardineshire, published in 1808, will show the little attention that was paid to the breeding of cattle in that county at that period, compared with the present :—

"At the present time the Kincardineshire cattle seem to me to be among the best of the Scottish breed, and, unless it be from Buchan, I have nowhere in Scotland seen a more thriving race. A Mearns ox of a year old may be stated as weighing fifteen stones, a two-year-old twenty-five, a three-year-old thirty-five, and a four-year-old forty-five stones. These, among the better fed cattle, are medium rates, but many examples of a larger growth can be given.

"It must be understood," adds the Reporter, "that it is to the better sort of cattle that this applies, to such as are in the hands of the proprietors and the principal tenants. The colour of cattle most esteemed in this county is black, and next to this dark brown, and brown striped with black. A large spreading head of horns is also a great recommendation. There may be something fanciful in this, for good cattle are found in all colours, and the dodded or hornless are as good as any ; yet the dealers give a plausible reason for their preference of these particular colours. It is, say they, that our cattle may be ascertained to be Scotch cattle when they come to the English market, where, from their known hardihood, they are in great repute, and could not be so readily distinguished but for these colours, so different from the white and brown brindled cattle of England." Fancy such a report upon the cattle of Aberdeenshire coming from Mr. M'Combie of Easter Skene, Mr. Cruickshank, or any of the other great breeders of the present day.

Little attention was paid to the breeding or feeding of cattle in Aberdeenshire till about fifty years ago. It was about that period that the first shorthorn bull was brought into that county, which was the joint property of the late Mr. Alexander Hay then tenant at Shethin, in the parish of Tarves, and another friend of mine.

A little before that period there were only two butchers in the Aberdeen market who kept prime fed meat. The first butcher who introduced good

meat in this district was a Deacon Martin. He was quite an enthusiast in the business. He thought nothing of beast or body that was'nt fat. Having been told of a woman who had thrown herself over the bridge of Montrose and been drowned, the only remark made by him was, "Wis the hizzie fat?" It was only, I think, in 1826, or thereabouts, when steamers began to ply between Aberdeen and London, that cattle began to be shipped, at least in any quantity, to the London market. At present, besides supplying the Aberdeen market with abundance of excellent meat, cattle not surpassed in any market within Her Majesty's dominions, and dead meat of the best quality, are sent to the London market. The quantities sent up during the year 1880 are as follows :—

1. The number of slaughtered cattle sent from Aberdeen to London by sea and land 104,000, average 6½ cwt.

2. Number of live cattle to London 20,000.

3. Number of live cattle to all other parts of England 5,000.

Till good meat came to be supplied by the butchers, most of the country gentlemen fed and used their own cattle for home consumption, and most people throughout the country of smaller means were in the habit of killing what was called a mart, at the beginning of each winter, which served them fresh and salted to the end of it. I find from the Statistical Account of Chapel of Garioch that oxen, in former times, of seven, eight, nine, and even ten years of age, were taken from the plough, fed

after the manner of the times, and killed for consumption ; but it was observed, and no doubt justly, that the meat was very dry. Within my recollection, prime fed meat was generally that of cattle of four years old, seldom under three years old. Cattle, as a rule, got no turnips till the third year, and they were fed only from that year. At present the highest feeders allow the calves to suck and feed with their mothers on the grass till it ceases to be plentiful. The calves are then allowed to feed on turnips as the winter draws on, till the next grass, and, after pasturing the following season so long as the grass is plentiful, they are fed upon turnips, with which they are liberally supplied, and sometimes upon other fattening food, till spring, when they are sold, according to size and weight, at from £20, not seldom at upwards of £30 a-piece. The meat is then rich and juicy, but not equal in flavour to what is older. An immense quantity of dead and live cattle, of the best quality, as has been already said, is annually exported from Aberdeen to London and elsewhere.

The causes which have contributed most to the improvement of land, and to the increase and fattening of stock in this country within the last half century, are furrow draining, and the application of bones, guano, and other artificial manures. By the water which stood in ill-cultivated soils during the winter the manure was diluted and weakened, and, owing to the wetness of the soil in spring, it could not be early ploughed or early sown, and

was consequently late in being reaped. Before the system of thorough trenching and furrow-draining was adopted in this parish the harvest on the banks of the Dee was ordinarily about three weeks earlier than in the higher, exposed, and wet lands in the parish, and the quality of the crops on the latter not equal to that on the former. Now the difference in the time of sowing and reaping in the higher and lower lands is, at least in many years, scarcely perceptible. The grain is generally greater in quantity and equal in quality, and the straw generally more abundant, in the higher grounds and what is really the less genial climate. I find, from a neighbouring miller, who mills grain from the new and old land, that the weight and production of meal are in favour of the former.

Since the commencement of my incumbency immense tracts of moor and moss land have been reclaimed in this parish, at an expense, including trenching, clearing off stones, draining, and fencing, of from £25 to £30 an acre, which has yielded the proprietors, in some cases at least, five per cent. upon their outlay.

My object in making these short remarks upon agriculture has been to point to the contrast between the past and the present, which has been my object generally throughout the whole of this little work. I am no practical farmer, and my opinions upon agriculture ought to have little weight with practical men, as I never farmed any more land than a glebe of five acres, and only keep two milch cows.

All my knowledge is derived from casual intercourse with intelligent farmers and my own observation in my own parish, where, as I have said, moss and moorland have been improved with great success, and on a very extensive scale. I am satisfied that any engagement incompatible with a minister's true work secularizes his mind and diminishes his own self-respect, and the respect of his parishioners. I have, however, found it an advantage, in my intercourse with my parishioners, to be able to speak sensibly about their business as well as my own; and I have found influence for good in this way which I should not have otherwise possessed.

Seasons and Crops during the Last Period of the last Century.

There can be no doubt that the increased extent of cultivated land has had considerable influence upon the climate of the county of Aberdeen for the reasons which have been mentioned; and this is very apparent from what has passed of the present, as contrasted with the last thirty years of the past century. It is to be hoped there will be no such seed times and harvests—such failures of crops and dearth and misery as existed in the latter period. The improvement in the cultivation of the soil and other causes which have been mentioned, and the importation of grain, furnish us with hopes that we shall never see the like again. But our forefathers, arguing from the seasons between 1758 and 1765,

might have come to the same conclusion as far as climate was concerned.

I have in my possession a minute diary of the weather between 1758 and 1795, in which the good and bad years are minutely described. The lady who wrote it was the wife of the Laird of Kemnay of that period, and aunt of my late uncle, Dr. George Morison, to whom she gave it.

It begins in January, 1758. "21st May, cut spinage that was sown that year, and had peas in full blossom; the 18th June we had a full ashet of peas and some cherries and strawberries. In the year 1760 we had a dish of green peas, the 11th of June. 1762, the 2nd April, I walked round a part of Kemnay parks on the snow, it being as high as the dyke and hard and firm to walk on, and much snow over all the ground, yet this year we cut spinage sown that year the 17th May, and had a dish of peas sown that year the 16th June, and had also artichokes and some ripe strawberries. 1765, our green peas and artichokes was only at table the 3rd July; and tasted some strawberries and cherries in the garden." It is to be observed, however, that the dates here must be old style, and eleven days later, according to our reckoning. But making allowance for the difference of style, these articles were as early then as they are at present.

The diary does not become minute till 1766, but in that year there is only reference to the weather, and not to the crops. The following is the summary—"this year, eighty days rain, thirty-five days

snow on the ground, and seventeen days wind." The most terrible of all the years of this period was 1782, of which Mrs. Burnet gives a very particular and sad description, and it is all the more memorable in consequence of its being succeeded by two bad years, 1783 and 1784. These years are described in the following lines, which were repeated to me by my father when I was a boy, and which are more remarkable for their truth than their poetical merit :—

"A paraphrase on auchty twa,
The sairest year that ere we saw ;
An' auchty three was verra sair,
For meal we had it not to spare ;
Auchty four the win' blew high,
Made many a sailor for to die ;
Ships in the sea did sink like lead,
Of that we in the news did read ;
Houses were tirred an' rucks blew ower ;
I'm really feared at auchty four."

"Auchty twa" may well be said to be the sairest year that ere they saw. In speaking of that year, the Rev. Patrick Grant, minister of the parish of Duthil, Strathspey, gives the following description of the state of his parish in his statistical account of it in 1792 :—

"The situation of the parish in 1782 and 1783 was truly distressing. Had it not been for Government bounty, and Sir James Grant's large supplies from distant countries, the poorer class of people would

have perished. So great was the destruction of the crop in 1782, by the frost setting in so early as the month of August, that the most substantial corn which was sent to some of the mills in this parish was a crop of wild oats from a piece of ground which had been ploughed, but not sown."

It may be mentioned as a striking coincidence, having in view the dearth of 1782, and the succession of bad harvests which we are now, a hundred years afterwards, experiencing, that there was a terrible famine about the year 1680, a hundred years before, of which Mr. Grant gives a harrowing narrative in his statistical account.

The following is an account given of the winds and storms of 1784, by Mrs. Burnet, in her diary of the weather already referred to :—(1783) December "27 —The snow very deep, and hardly any travelling with wheel carriage. The post from this to Old-meldrum—12 miles—was nine hours on the road. From the 27th to the 31st showers of snow and the keenest frost we have seen for many years ; no heat of the room makes any impression on the ice on the inside of the windows. The water in a bason froze in half-an-hour at ten o'clock forenoon, though a good fire in the room. 1st January, 1784, the air milder ; 2nd, a good deal of wind and drift ; at night a violent storm of wind at south-east. The hurricane of wind blowed all the snow into such wreaths as was never seen in this country, many of them eighteen foot perpendicular ; many people were two days in their houses before they could be

cast so as to let them out. All travelling except on foot put a stop to. At the Cove, and several other little harbours near this, great pieces of the rocks were rent off and thrown into the harbour. The sea came out forty yards farther than the oldest man ever remembered, and a great deal of lightning along with the wind, which continued on the 3rd all day. Many houses in the country were unroofed, and stacks of corn and hay carried off." "21st December—The high wind of the 6th and 7th did infinite damage on the coast of England ; more than a hundred ships stranded or lost." Compare the facts with the poetry—

"Ships in the sea did sink like lead,
Of that we in the news did read ;
Houses were tirred and rucks blew ower,
I'm really feared at auchty four."

Difference of the Value of Land between the Present and the Past.

The following interesting fact, stated by my predecessor, Dr. Morison, in his statistical account of this parish, cannot but be interesting to readers who take an interest in agricultural matters in reference to the increase in the value of land since the middle of last century. A Mr. Fordyce, who had accompanied Lord Anson in his voyages, returned to his native country about the year 1745. He travelled from London to Aberdeen on horseback, with all his prize money, in specie, in his saddle-bag, and bought

the property of Ardoe, in this parish, for £500. It is stated by Dr. Morison that when he took possession of his estate he found the mansion house, such as it was, with the garden and about forty acres of land, in the hands of a tenant who paid about £3 6s. 8d. sterling, annually. Having it in contemplation at that time to go abroad again, he asked the man if he would renew his lease, which had expired, at the annual rent of £5 sterling, and his answer was, " Na, by my faith, God has gien me mair wit." The land was recently sold to the present proprietor for about £40,000.

Within my memory, no landed proprietor in this part of the country let his moors, or his partridge and other shooting grounds ; and, if I mistake not, the sale of game was illegal. It is impossible to guess the amount now produced from their moors to the proprietors, or the annual sum now realised in Aberdeenshire and the adjoining counties from the sale of game ; or to calculate the sums of money spent by, or the benefit otherwise derived from, the tenants of shooting lodges and their dependants. To say nothing of the opening up of the country by roads, the erection of gentlemen's seats and villas, and the enlargement of favourite villages for the temporary residence of lodgers from all parts of the country, the money circulated by these means has, in various ways, contributed to the comfort of the people and to the prosperity of the country generally.

In the villages on Deeside, during the summer

months, there are lodgers from all parts of the country, and many of the gentlemen's seats are vacated by their owners, and rented by strangers. How different from the days that I have seen!

It may be readily imagined to what extent the causes I have mentioned have tended to the benefit of the districts interested, and of the country generally. I must especially refer to the benefits which such men as Mr. Cunliffe Brooks of Glentanar, and my early friend, Mr. Mackenzie of Kintail and Glenmuick, have conferred upon the districts in which they live.

When Mr. Brooks became tenant of Glentanar, now eleven years ago, he at once set about improvements of a substantial and beneficial character. Much has been said about the depopulation of Glentanar, for which there is no foundation. Two small farmers, or rather crofters, stood in the way of improvements which Mr. Brooks contemplated. In order to indemnify them, he gave them large bonuses for surrendering their holdings, and provided them with farms larger and better than they formerly possessed—farms which, at his own expense he reclaimed from waste lands in the neighbourhood. For the other tenants in the glen he built new and commodious houses and steadings, and, as I have been informed, the rents have not been raised. The population of Glentanar is now considerably greater than when Mr. Brooks became tenant of the shootings. Throughout these eleven years he has employed on an average about forty labourers, making

roads, putting up fences, and reclaiming waste lands ; besides as large a number of skilled workmen, building houses and bridges and making other improvements. As one fact with reference to these operations, I may mention that there would have been scant means of livelihood for the people but for the employment provided them by Mr. Brooks.

I forget who it was that said in old times that he is a benefactor to his country who makes two blades of grass grow where one only used to grow. Such being the case, the blessing is peculiarly applicable to Mr. Brooks. But what is not least to be admired in his character is that while he is *par principibus* he is *communis infimis*, *i.e.* "While he is equal to the highest, he is courteous and affable to the humblest." So says Cornelius Nepos of Pomponius Atticus.

Another trait of Mr. Brooks' character, which is of interest to every minister of the Church, is that, although he is not a member of our Church, he has contributed towards the erection and adornment of a church and manse at Dinnet, in his own neighbourhood, which were very much wanted.

I do not know Mr. Brooks, having never either seen him or had any intercourse with him, and I can, therefore, sincerely say that it is the deeds of a good man which have spoken to me and not Mr. Brooks.

Mr Mackenzie has effected many changes and made many improvements on his Glenmuick property. Besides the drainage of his extensive deer forest increasing its fertility to a large extent, the improve-

ment of the old roads, and the new pathways he has opened up, testify to both his judgment and energy in deer forest improvement. He has also planted a great breadth of hill ground with Scotch firs, larch, and other trees. The localities have been judiciously chosen, and the young plantations which are in a thriving condition, will soon add much to the natural beauty of his estate, besides contributing much to its value. As a landlord he is liberal to his tenants, by whom he is much respected. Some new farm steadings, on the newest and most improved principle, have been erected by him, and others much enlarged, while rows of labourers' cottages form a pleasing feature in the sylvan landscape and mark his care for that class of our population. But the most striking object that meets the visitor's eye is the handsome mansion he has built for himself, conspicuously situated on the slope of a hill overlooking the village of Ballater and the valleys of the Dee and Gairn. The mansion-house is surrounded with beautiful policies, within which are the gardens and an elegant Episcopal Chapel. He has also made arrangements for building another mansion on the site of the old Castle of Brackley, where lived the good Baron whose tragic fate is commemorated in the ballad lore of the district.

Characters whom I have known.

Mr. Gordon, a former Schoolmaster of Newhills, was remarkable for his eccentricities, and had a

very ready and quaint mode of expressing himself. When he was being examined by the Presbytery of Aberdeen as to his qualifications for the office of schoolmaster, he was told by one of the members that a phrase used by him was not good Latin. "It is used by Cæsar, Reverend Sir," replied Mr. Gordon, "and its generally thocht that he does na write ill Laetin."

He and his minister very often quarrelled, but at the annual examination of the school by the Committee of Presbytery, the then minister of Durris was generally able to reconcile them. On one occasion he succeeded so well, and they seemed so friendly together, that he thought they would not quarrel again. He, however, met Mr. Gordon some time afterwards, and asked him how the minister and he were getting on together. "Verra badly," said Mr. Gordon. "Well," said his friend, "it must be your own fault, for Mr. Allan seemed much inclined to be on a friendly footing with you. What is the matter now?" After detailing a few minor grievances, Mr. Gordon stated as the head and front of Mr. Allan's offending, "And on the fourteenth day of October last he call-ed me a dog."

Mr. Gordon was a man of great personal strength, which he was ready to exert without much provocation. Once, when he was passing along a by-road (which was held to be a public right-of-way), he was challenged by a servant of the proprietor, the late Dr. William Dauney, then Sheriff-Substitute of Aberdeenshire, a very old man, who, with other in-

firmities of age, had lost his teeth, for which a remedy could not be found as in the present day. The servant asked Mr. Gordon to turn, and, on his refusal, attempted to stop him by main force, upon which Mr. Gordon laid hold of him and dashed him into the ditch by the roadside, saying he would go that way in spite of the Sheriff. In consequence, he was summoned before the Sheriff for assault. In the course of the examination the Sheriff said to him, "Did you say, Mr. Gordon, that you would go that road in spite of my teeth?" "I said," answered Mr. Gordon, "I would go that way, but I had no word o' your teeth." Even in those days there were substitutes for Sheriffs, but there were no substitutes for teeth.

There was an old man of my acquaintance, of great simplicity of character, who was teacher of a side school in the adjoining parish of Nigg, of the name of DAVID SYMON. He had a wife, a large family, and a miserable living, and was often in great straits. He had been twice married, and in speaking to me of his first wife, and giving a pathetic account of her death, he said, in conclusion, "O but my first wife was 'a fine young youth.'" With a great struggle he got his family brought up, and set out into the world tolerably qualified for making their way in it. He used to speak with unaffected feelings of gratitude to God for carrying him through all his difficulties, which at times seemed to be utterly overwhelming. In his latter days I had the good

fortune to procure for him an allowance from a public fund, which made him fairly comfortable for the rest of his life. In consequence he spoke to me and of me in a most honourable manner, addressing me as "your holiness," and was in the habit of asking any of my friends when they had seen "his holiness," while he addressed his own minister only as "your reverenceship." He was fond of speaking of Church matters, and used to express his views upon such subjects in a very quaint and original manner. His school stood on the side of the turnpike road from Aberdeen to the south, and his pupils, who consisted principally of the children of the men who began the reclamation of the surrounding tract of waste ground, used to run after the coaches for coppers. I disliked this very much, and told him one day he should try to put a stop to it. While he quite agreed with me, he said, "But great allowances must be made for them, for you see, sir, they don't see much *table talk* at home!"

Drumforskie, where Mr. Symon's school was situated, was about two miles from the Bridge of Dee, which was the scene of one of the battles fought between the army of the Marquis of Montrose and the brave burghers of Aberdeen. It was a cold exposed barren moor, and, before it was cultivated, it was a most unsightly object to travellers on the south turnpike road. The scene of the battlefield is perpetuated by the name of the Covenanters' Folds. The contiguity of Drumforskie to these places, and the description given by Sir Walter Scott of the

ancestral property of Dugald Dalgetty, and some resemblance in the name, afford a strong probability that the Drumforskie I have mentioned is Sir Walter's Drumthwacket. Dalgetty, in bargaining with Lord Monteith for joining the Royalist army, concludes—"And yet, my lord, if I could but be "made certiorate that my natural hereditament of "Drumthwacket had fallen into possession of any "of these loons of Covenanters, who could be, in the "event of our success, conveniently made a traitor "of, I have so much value for that fertile and "pleasant spot, that I would e'en take on with you "for the campaign." To this Lord Monteith's attendant replied—"I can resolve Captain Dalgetty's "question, for if his estate of Drumthwacket be, as "I conceive, the long waste moor, so called, that lies "five miles south of Aberdeen, I can tell him it was "lately purchased by Elias Strachan, as rank a rebel "as ever swore the Covenant." If my conjecture is well founded this is a remarkable example of Sir Walter's accuracy of observation and description.

I shall mention another instance of Sir Walter's observant faculty, in a fanciful name given in the "Antiquary" to a bay near which Lieutenant Taffril's vessel, the Search, was supposed at Fairport to have been wrecked and all hands lost. Lieutenant Taffril, as is known to all the readers of the "Antiquary," had put to sea on a cruise with Lovel, who had wounded M'Intyre, Oldbuck's nephew, in a duel. No tidings were heard of the ship for some time, but at last the evil rumour spread, happily without founda-

tion, that she had struck on the Rattray reef of rocks near *Dirtenalan* bay, and all hands lost. Doubtless, Sir Walter, while in this quarter, or on his cruise along the Aberdeenshire coast, had seen or heard of a large sea gull which watches the smaller ones catching and swallowing their prey and pursues them till they disgorge it, and swallows it himself. I have frequently seen this done at the mouth of the Don, when a boy, and remember that this unsavoury bird went under the name of the Dirtenalan. We may conjecture that Sir Walter, having been amused with its name, may have given it as a humorous designation of the bay near which Lieutenant Taffril's ship was reported to have been lost during the storm.

There was a Sacrist at King's College many years ago of the name of JAMES COCK. It was one of his duties to bring from Aberdeen to the College the money for payment of the Professors' salaries and the bursaries. He was a man of a patient and gentle disposition, and one whose spirit was not easily excited to wrath, or to the returning of evil for evil. This was the more remarkable, as the Professors themselves were not, as a body, distinguished for their gentleness and long-suffering; indeed, the warfare among them, in those times, was so continuous as to give rise to the proverb, "A' the warld's at peace but the Orkney lairds and the Auldtown College." Some thieves having heard that, on a certain day, James was to convey

a considerable sum of money from the new to the old town, waylaid him, knocked him down, and rifled his pockets. The money, however, being secreted about his person, the thieves found only a few shillings in his pocket. Thinking that that was all he had, they were greatly annoyed, and, on James rising none the worse for his fall, they gave him a kick behind, upon which he, overjoyed that the money was safe, turned round and said, in his usual bland way, "Thank you, gentlemen, good nicht to you."

James kept students as boarders, but fed them rather sparingly, and, on their complaining to him that they did not get enough to eat, he replied, "Gentlemen, I have heard the Professors say that too much meat was not good for students."

I had a carrier for many years of the name of ANDREW SANDISON, who was an original. He was a little man, with small piercing eyes, and a quizzical face. He could not read writing, but had such a good memory that he almost never forgot any message given him. At an early period of life he had got into a scrape, into which young men in his station, alas! too often fall, that preyed upon his mind so much that he resolved to commit suicide. On the night on which he had decided to carry out his fatal resolution, he went to the mistress, with whom he was a farm servant, and said to her, "Goodwife, dinna mak' ony sowens to me the nicht." "Fat for, Andrew," said the goodwife.

"I'm gaun to droun mysel," was the reply. Andrew, however, changed his mind.

A regulation had been made in Aberdeen that no one should ride in a cart without a double rein for his horse. One day, when Andrew was riding up Union Street in his cart with a single rein, he was seen by a late Procurator-Fiscal, who got a fine of five shillings imposed upon him. Andrew came home in great wrath, and spoke in no very comfortable terms about the Fiscal. The next time I saw Andrew, coming out of Aberdeen, I asked him in joke whether he had seen the Fiscal. "Aye did I," said Andrew, "I keppit him comin' doun Union Street. I said naething, but jist gied my mearie a nudge wi' my elbow, and said till her, 'see, missie, there's vinegar *nib*.'"

On one occasion Andrew met with an accident on his way from Aberdeen, of which he gave the following humorous description to a lady who was one of his employers. On her asking him how it had happened, he replied, "Ye see, Madam, the wye was this. The housekeeper at Mr. Garioch's town's house pat in a hen an' ten chuckens into my caert. They were in twa different hampers. The chuckens was in ane, an' their mither was i' the tither, an' they never held their tongues, fae the time that I left Aberdeen, till the time that I took them oot o' my caert at Heathcot; an' as I was gaun by the Justice Mill dam, they raised sic a terrible skraighen, that my mearie cocket her lugs and was like to rin awa; and when I was at the back door o' the caert

cowtionin' the hen, with the beastie's rein in my han', the craetur' gied a tit, an' afore I kent fat I was about, I was lyin' o' the braid o' my back o' the toll road, wi' my shin a' peeled an' bleedin'." When I afterwards went to see him, he insisted on my looking at his leg, which he said was "very ill faurt twa or three days syne, but wasna' that *oonbonny* noo." The country people here used to call a healthy wound, a "bonny sair."

Andrew had had three wives, who were all dead before I knew him, but he had no child with any of them but one. After the death of his last wife, he made an agreement with his daughter, that, if she would stay with him during his life time, he would leave her all he possessed. At that time he was above seventy years of age; and the daughter was well advanced in life, and far from being of a comely appearance. A neighbour, however, after she had lived with her father for a while, asked her in marriage and was accepted, to Andrew's great mortification. He was not only in very low spirits for some time afterwards, but very angry with his daughter. On his mentioning his grievance to a lady to whom he was carrier, she endeavoured to convince him of the unreasonableness of his displeasure against his daughter. But Andrew would neither be comforted nor pacified, and thus justified himself,—"Ye see, Madam, when she came to bide wi' me, I cu'd hae gotten a wife ony wye, *just ony wye*, but noo there's nae an' 'umman in a' the countra that'll leuk at me."

CHARLIE REID was a cottar, or small farmer, on the estate of Drum, in this district, and in his leisure time was employed as a sort of gamekeeper to the Laird. He was a tall gaunt-looking carle, of a spare habit of body, lanky-cheeked, and large boned. He used to wear a broad Scotch bonnet, a coarse blue short coat with large metal buttons, knee corduroy breeches, rough worsted stockings, and thick brogues. He was an old carle of great self-possession and independence. I shall give my readers only one illustration of the two latter qualities. He was taken by his master on one occasion, when he was about seventy years of age, on a shooting excursion to Mr. Gordon's of Nethermuir. At that time Mr. Gordon had only a maiden sister living with him, very plain and far advanced in life. The two Lairds, who had given Charlie, after the labours of the day, more whisky than was good for him, thought to affront him by telling him, the next day, that he had kissed Miss Gordon when he was tipsy. Charlie, who was not very easily put out, coolly replied, "Weel, maybe aye an' maybe na—nae gret haerm, I daur say. I'll warrant there's nae muckle o' that comes her wye" (way). Charlie occasionally broke pointer dogs for strangers, and had an odd phraseology in speaking of his employers and on matters relating to his craft, mixing up the fashionable sportsman expressions of the time with those used by his own class. He used the word "Toho" very properly, and with an air of great importance. On the other hand he called

scent "guff" and partridges "fools" (fowls); when a dog was on the track of partridges, he said it was "roadin' fools," and when it was drawing up to them he called the movement "draewin to fools." On one occasion that I remember, while Charlie was showing off a dog that he was breaking for a son of the then proprietor of the Devanha Brewery, whom he styled, in his odd way, "The Young Devann," the dog made a very staunch point, and Charlie went up to him with the certainty that game was before him. The dog, however, would not go forward, but began to show some signs of uncertainty by moving his tail, and at last it turned out that the point was a false one. Charlie, however, being anxious to make the best apology he could for the dog to "The Young Devann," said, "Eh, sir, wisna that a fawmous offer?" He was not, however, so indulgent when the dog committed the next fault. A hare having got up, the dog set out at full speed in chase of it, and Charlie, after trying in vain to get him back, said, "Noo, isna that provokin'? But in coorse he'll need hippie dippie;" and, on the dog's return he soon shewed what was meant by hippie dippie, by the severe application of a heavy whip.

There was a man in this parish of great strength and activity, notwithstanding his diminutive size, called GEORDIE WALKER, who was in the habit of improving waste land on the property of a small proprietor in this parish, formerly a barber, but who

now considered himself a person of some consequence. On one occasion they had a dispute about the amount due for work done by Geordie. In the course of the altercation the laird said, "Geordie, I have given you a great deal of good money;" "and I," said Geordie, "hae gien you a hantle o' good wark, sir." The laird then drew himself up with great dignity and said, "There's not a gentleman in this parish who has spent so much money in improving his property, or done so much in supporting poor labourers and their families as I." "Aye," said Geordie, "but fan gentlemen are i' the question I doot, sir, ye wad need to stan' by." Long afterwards, when I reminded Geordie of the matter, he said, "I've aften been terrible angry at mysel' for speaking sae impidently till him. Ye see, I was aye a terrible hasty creatur', though my paashun did na last lang; an' dee fat I likit, gin onybody haed gien me a skelp upo' the tae cheek, I cud never hae turned my other cheek to get anidder ane." I once heard Geordie at a marriage party giving his opinion about the disparity of age between husband and wife. A brother pretty far advanced in life had married a young good-looking girl, in reference to whom Geordie was saying, "some o' my neebour folk hae been saying to me 'yon's a bra young wife that your brider Onra (Andrew) has gotten,' an' I say, 'gueed sen' him luck o' her.' My wife's about my ain age, an *I* think that best, an' it maun be allow't that naething looks waur aboot a toun (i.e., a farm steading) than a young man an' an auld stuog o' a

wife." Geordie, who was generally very ready with his replies, had the laugh turned against him by a former well-known auctioneer in this parish. A choke-rope had been put up for sale, and the auctioneer was setting off its qualities when Geordie bawled out, "It's ower short, Cassie." "Na," said Cassie, "its as lang's you, Geordie, and ye're nae short." Geordie was not ready with a reply to this home thrust.

There was a famous character well-known in Aberdeen many years ago, of the name of JOHN DUFF, the Banff carrier. A man had stolen a pair of boots from his cart, and John had him apprehended. The Baillie, before whom the man was brought up, having asked John what evidence he had in support of the charge, he replied that he saw him "wi' his ain een." The Baillie asked if he had no more evidence. "There's nae need for't; there's nae doot he stole the beets, for I saw him mysel'." "Then," said the Baillie, "I must dismiss the panel." Whereupon John looked up in great astonishment, and said to his Honour, "Ye're nae lattin' him awa, are ye?" "Surely, John," replied the Baillie, "ye've nae proof." "Oh, then," said John, leaving the court in great indignation, "D——n you for a Baillie."

My father had a maid-servant named NANSE LYELL, who had a great deal of ready wit and a number of proverbial sayings which I never heard

used by any one else. I cannot say whether they were original or not, but from the manner in which they were said they appeared to be so. I was a little boy at the time, but I remember being much amused by her clever and humorous remarks. She spoke of hard work as being "bra' haermless diversion." When people joked with her she would say, "Ye're turnin' raether funny wi' me noo, I'm affronted I haena a dram to offer you." When she saw any one in bad humour she would say, "Fat's the maetter wi' *you* the day? Ye've surely been up a' nicht waukin' the taengs," in allusion to the lyke wake which was customary in those times. When she thought anyone was speaking too much, but not to the purpose, she used to say, "Ye hae mair jaw than judgment, like Hochy Edom's calf." When she was asked to do anything she would say, "Weel, weel, your word's the law, as the tailor said to the clockin' hen fan she pyket oot baith his een." On one occasion, when she had succeeded in raising a great weight with the kitchen poker, she said, "That gars her rise ahin', like Mutton Brae's wig." Being once asked whether it was true that she was going to be married to a weaver, she replied, "Eh, na! I wat that's nae true. A wiver! na, na! want wad be a cordial compared wi' a wiver." On another occasion, she was asked whether she had a guinea; and she replied, "A guinea, na, weel-a-wat I haena' a guinea; gin I had a guinea I wad na bide here, I wad gang awa' to Auld Deer or New Deer or some o' that foreign countries." On one occasion she

conducted herself in a violent and unreasonable manner. My mother having reproved her, Nanny said, "I'm determined to keep my ain side o' the hoose." To which my mother replied, "Well, Nannie, if that's to be the way I have no objection, but mine will be the inside, and your's will be the outside."

The following anecdotes were told me by a friend in Aberdeen, about a couple who used to reside in Chapel of Garioch, named ROBIE TAMSON and his wife JEAN DEANS. In those days, in addition to the illicit whisky distilleries, many of the common people brewed small quantities of whisky for their own use, and Robie and Jean used to do so. Jean, although she was a woman of great religious profession, did not think there was any sin in brewing a *droppie* for her own and Robie's private use. One Saturday night the requisite quantity could not be completed till towards three on the Sunday morning, and, in her haste to get through with the work, Jean knocked down and broke the *piggie* in which the whisky was contained, and all the whisky was spilt. Jean, after this, thought it necessary to pray earnestly that she might be forgiven for the breaking of the Sabbath ; but, in telling the circumstances to a friend, she said, "but, dee fat I like't, through a' my prayer the broken piggie was aye been-most i' my thochts." Robie and Jean had for a long time resided in the vicinity of the parish Church, but they afterwards removed to about three

miles' distance from it. When they were about to flit, Robie was ill, and Jean did not expect him to recover. They had a carpenter to assist them in removing their things, and, when everything was ready, Jean said to Robie in a very coaxing way, "Noo, Robie, that the *wricht's* here, michtna ye jist lat him tak' your measure for your coffin; it'll save him a traevel, and ye ken ye winna live." But Robie declined to allow this to be done, and he got better and out-lived Jean after all.

Another anecdote was told me by the same informant of a man named JOHNNY DUNCAN, who was a grave-digger, and his wife JEAN COOK. Johnny said that Jean "was very ill dyin', and she aye fowt." What is meant by this is that she had long struggles before death, and that, through some paralytic affection, she kicked with her feet. She died on a Sunday morning, and, a neighbour who called in the afternoon, expressed his surprise to Johnny, that he was in such good spirits. "Aye," said Johnny, "that may be noo Tam, but I was makin' a bonny din aboot her i' the mornin'." Jean having expressed a wish to be buried in a neighbouring parish, Johnny went to arrange about the grave, and to make as good a bargain as possible with his brother-in-trade for the digging of it. "Noo, Peter, man," said he, "ye manna' tak' onything for diggin' Jean's grave, for ye ken it's an auld sayin', that 'tarry breeks gangs free' (*i.e.*, sailors of a strange ship don't pay passage money). Johnny soon went to seek a successor to

Jean, but he was at first unsuccessful; two or three having refused him. With reference to this, his minister said to him one day, "O', Johnny, I hear that ye're seekin' another wife;" upon which Johnny replied, "Gin ye believe a' that ye hear, Sir, ye micht as weel cat a' that ye see." Johnny at length got somebody to agree to marry him; and the minister on hearing this said, "Johnny, I hear that you are to be married now, I think you might hae been just dooin' as ye are;" upon which Johnny said, in self-justification, "Ye see, sir, a' thing was gaun wrang i' the hoose, an' I did'na ken the temper of the potawtoes i' the pits; an', sir, she's a rael bonny creatur', an' gin ye had seen her, I dinna think bit ye wid hae liket her yersel." "But," said the minister, "gin she was sae bonny, what made her tak' the like o' you." "O," said Johnny, "ye see, sir, she was atween the win' an the wa'" (*i.e.*, in great poverty), "and that made her the mair pliable."

Omnium Gatherum.

There is a well authenticated fact which occurred in the Church of Udny during the vacancy in that parish about sixty years ago. It must be well known in this country that during a vacancy in a parish it is the duty of the Presbytery of the bounds to see it supplied. In this case the minister who first preached was the then minister of Logie-Buchan, who gave for his text, "And Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents." The next was the minister of Ellon, who gave out the same text, "And Jacob was

a plain man dwelling in tents." The next was the late minister of Daviot, then a probationer, who, to the still greater surprise of the congregation, gave out the same text, "And Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents." The congregation could not bear this any longer, and, on the text being given out for the third time, a blacksmith got up in great excitement and exclaimed, "The deil dwall him, he's dwalt here for the last three weeks."

The following is an example of self-possession by a man named Jamie Leonard, a parishioner here. He lived with his aged mother and one servant, to whom the mother suspected he had formed an attachment which did not meet with her approval. Jamie was often late out at night, and the servant was in the habit of opening the door for him. One night when he was late out, his mother, in order to ascertain the correctness of her suspicions, sent the servant to bed and sat up to wait for him herself. On her opening the door, and there being no light, Jamie, thinking that it was his sweetheart, threw his arms around her neck and gave her a hearty kiss, upon which his mother said, "O, Jamie, man, ye're kin' the nicht." Jamie, however, equal to the occasion, folded her again in his arms and gave her another kiss, saying to her at the same time, "Oh, mither, weel is't my duty to be kin' to you."

Another instance, which I have heard, of self-possession in trying circumstances is even more

striking than the last, but I cannot vouch for the truth of it. A man, who was going to be hanged, was, according to the custom of seventy or eighty years ago, uttering his last speech and dying words to the crowd assembled to witness the execution. When he was in the middle of his speech, the drop accidentally fell, but, as the rope broke, the man was not materially injured. On being set up again on the scaffold, he resumed his speech with the observation, "Weel, my freens, as I was tellin' you fan I was a wee bit intruppit."

The following is a sample of taking things coolly :—Willie Wood, a parishioner of the late Mr. Stirling, of Peterculter, above seventy years of age, came to him one day and asked him to marry him to a woman also well advanced in years. The Minister, knowing that this was an old engagement which had been broken off, inquired if that was not the case ; to which Willie replied—"That's verra true sir, I socht her thirty years syne, but her folk didna think me gueed eneuch for her, an' stoppit the marriage ; an' I thocht I wad lat her nicher on her tether a while. They're willin' eneuch to lat me tak' her noo."

The following is a good illustration of the folly of avarice. A man and his wife, far advanced in life, who had lived long in this parish, were believed upon moderate means to have accumulated a large sum of money for people in their humble station, but were

known to live nearly as miserably as any of the paupers on the poor's roll. A neighbour of theirs, who had a good deal of shrewdness and humour, once said to the man—"Robie, I wad like a leuk o' your bank book." "Fat eese wad that be to you, Annie?" said Robie. "Just as muckle eese (use) to me as it is to you; for it's o' nae ither eese to you but jist to leuk at it."

There was once a cow-couper in the parish of Fetteresso, named Sandy Macbain, who had been very successful in his business. In allusion to this the late minister of the parish said to him one day, "Sandy, you have been so successful in the couping of cows, I wonder you do not try horse-couping." To which Sandy replied, "Eh na, sir, I couldna venture wi' that, it's some sair for the saul" (soul), meaning that horse-dealing presents too great a temptation to the sin of cheating.

There is a fishing village in this quarter, where gentlemen used to get fish dinners in a small inn kept by a widow. One day a party called at the inn, and asked if they could get a fish dinner. "Na," said the widow, "ye canna get that, for the boats hacna been oot this ten days, and there's nae fish. But I hae deuks that ye wadna ken fae fish." It is well known that few articles of diet are more repulsive to connoisseurs in gourmandising than fish-tasted ducks.

An old friend of mine told me of a woman who, being asked how her husband, who was much older than herself, employed himself, said, "O, sir, he does naething but daunders oot an' daunders in, an' fan he's tired he jist gaes sclyte till's bed." The same woman, when asked by one of her neighbours, "foo her auld man was keepin'," replied, "A' body's deein' but him, an' I wadna wonner gin he was sittin' hostin' there at the day o' judgment."

My mother told me that, on one occasion, when she was visiting Dr. Shirreffs, formerly minister of the West Church of Aberdeen, a man called in great excitement, and said to the Doctor, "I want you to come and baptceeze a curn bairns to me immediately." "A curn bairns!" said the Doctor. "How many are there of them?" "There were," said the man, "four o' them afore I cam' awa, and they were thinkin' there wad be mair." There were really four born alive, but they all died.

Wonder is often expressed why the lawyers in Aberdeen are the only body of legal practitioners in Scotland, with the exception of the members of the bar in Edinburgh, who are styled advocates. I understand that, whatever may have been the origin of the title, it has received the recognition of the Sovereign in two royal charters. It seems, however, but a title of courtesy, and does not warrant its possessors to practice at the bar of the Supreme Court of Scotland. Why this courtesy was ex-

tended to them, in preference to all the other bodies of the same profession in Scotland, I cannot tell. The only probable reason that I can think of is, that they are regarded as superior to the rest. Be this as it may, I can say that, at present, they are a highly intelligent, able, and honourable body of men. I have often, however, observed some soreness among the Edinburgh people about the recognition of this title, and some tendency to sneer at it when applied. Once when dining with a friend in Edinburgh, he asked me what title the Aberdeen lawyers had to the name of advocates, and, on my telling him what I understood to be their title, he said, "But that's not the reason which a friend of yours gave to me of the matter. It was said by him that, on the occasion of a visit of one of the Scottish kings to Aberdeen, a petition was presented to his Majesty by the Aberdeen lawyers to grant them all the privileges of the advocates in Edinburgh. This petition, it is said, the king peremptorily refused to grant. At last the petitioners availed themselves of a popular notion that, if they could persuade the king to call them advocates, *that* would be a sufficient title; but that also he refused to do. The deputation, however, it is said, were very persistent, and followed his Majesty's carriage to some distance, crying, 'O, your Majesty, ca' us advocates, ca' us advocates.' This, it is said, went on till his Majesty, losing his patience, said to them, 'Gang hame wi' ye, and the deil tak' you, and ca' yourselves onything that ever ye like.' This, your friend told me, is their only charter."

Last century, and even in the beginning of the present century, I believe lawyers used to meet their clients in coffee-houses or public-houses, and a bottle of claret or a bowl of punch was generally called for to assist them in their deliberations. The Aberdeen advocates were in the habit of going, on market days, to a public-house, where their clients came to consult them. A bowl of punch was placed on the table, and everyone that wanted advice got a glass of punch, was duly advised, and, on taking his leave, laid a half-crown on the table as a fee. It is said that one of these legal worthies who, in helping others to punch, had not forgotten himself, was heard rattling his fees in his pocket on his way home and saying to himself, "Fine times this, Tammy Mason, aye makin' siller an' aye gettin' fou."

A story was told me the other day, by a parishioner, of a man who, in a neighbouring smiddy, was crying and lamenting about a mare which he had lost. The smith bore with him a while, but at length, losing all patience, he cried out to him, "Think shame o' yoursel', I've seen you put three wives in the yird, an' I never saw ye greet for ane o' them." "Aye," said the man, "I haed nae difficulty in gettin' a wife, but far am I to get anither mear?"

Dr. Gregory, the well-known Edinburgh physician of former days, was a son of a Professor of Medicine in King's College, Aberdeen. My father used to tell the following anecdote of the Doctor's

boyhood, which prognosticated his future energy and vigour of character. On one occasion, when the boy was setting out for an evening entertainment, dressed in a pair of white trousers, his attention was attracted to some boys who, after a heavy rain, were making a dam in the gutter at his father's gate. The gutter was full, and, as the boys could not supply enough of mud, the water was just about to overtop the breast of the dam. To prevent this, young Gregory, in his eagerness, sat down upon it, white trousers and all; and his mother, on coming out, found him sitting there and bawling out to the others, "Mair dubs, boys; mair dubs!"

A clerical friend of mine mentioned to me an incident which occurred to him on his visiting an old man in his last illness. The man was lying in a box bed, and my friend, noticing that three sides of the bed were closely hung round with walking sticks, said to him, "John, what use could you have had for so many sticks?" "Weel, sir," replied the man, "I never had eese for sae mony at ony time o' my life, and far less need hae I for sae mony noo; but, ye see, the risson (reason) was this, sir, *my gennius lay in staaves.*"

Dr. Morison, my predecessor, was on one occasion baptizing a child to a fisherman in the village of Findon, in his own parish, famous for its Findon or Finnan haddocks. In the performance of the ceremony he sprinkled, as he usually did, more

water than was necessary upon the child's face, and, the borders of the child's cap having prevented it running off, it set the little creature a-coughing. This alarmed the grandfather and made him hastily bawl out to his son, "Heel't, Sanny, heel't man," but, as Sanny was in no great hurry in heeling it, the old man cried out, with still greater vehemence, "Canna ye heel't, ye stupid idiot, for gin ye dinna make haste an' heel't ye'll droun't." The *heeling* of a boat is turning it upon its side, to empty it the more speedily of the water.

I have heard a story of a clever, but not very civil, rebuke given to one of the old Bishops of Aberdeen by one of his curates who had come to visit him. The curate, who had a very poor salary, wore a very shabby coat, of which the Bishop took notice, in, what seemed to the former, a very offensive manner. The curate, who thought the Bishop might have bettered his situation, had he been so minded, replied, "As I was on my way to Aberdeen, I saw a boy harrowing some newly-sown ground. One harrow had got on the top of the other, but as the boy was leading by the head one of the horses, which was restive, he could not right them. A man, who was passing, called out to him, 'Your harrows are ridin', laddie,' but the boy took no notice at first. He at last got angry, however, thinking that the other should have righted the harrows, and retorted, 'Deil pyke oot their een that sees a hole i' their neebour's coat an' winna mend it.'"

In former days strangers coming from England to Aberdeen used frequently to bring letters of introduction to some of the booksellers from their English correspondents. About sixty years ago a gentleman from England brought an introduction to Messrs. Angus, booksellers in Aberdeen, which, in the absence of the managing partner, he delivered to his brother. In the course of conversation this brother, who was a simple-minded man, said to the gentleman, "I think you said you cam' fae Oxfoord." "You are quite right," said the other. "Weel, noo," said the man, "isna that very remarkable; Ye come fae *Ox*-foord, and our country place at the Stocket's called *Coo*-foord."

Nursery Rhymes.

The following are Nursery Rhymes, which used to be sung by my mother to her children. I have published them, as they may revive pleasing recollections in some of my readers, who have heard them in their early years, and amuse others who have not. I regret that I cannot give the tunes to which they used to be sung. Many years ago, I gave a copy of these rhymes to the late Mr. George R. Kinloch, Register House, Edinburgh, who may have published, or otherwise disposed of them.

I.

THE CRAW KILLED THE PUSSEY, O'.

The craw killed the pussey, O',
The craw killed the pussey, O';

The muckle cat sat doun an' grat
I' Johnny's little housie, O'.
Comin' thro' the mossie, O',
Comin' thro' the mossie, O';
I licket oot my puckle meal,
An' played me wi' my puockie, O'.

2.

THE CATTIE RADE TO PAISLEY.

The cattie rade to Paisley, to Paisley, to Paisley,
The cattie rade to Paisley upon a harrow tine;
An' she cam' loupin' hame again,
An' she cam' loupin' hame again,
An' she cam' loupin' hame again,
Upon a mear o' mine.
It was upon a Wednesday—
A winny, winny Wednesday,
It was upon a Wednesday,
Gin I can richtly min'.

3.

THE CATTIE AN' THE MOOSIE.

The cattie sat o' the kiln barn wa',
Spinnin', spinnin',
By cam' a little wee mousie,
Rinnin', rinnin';
The mousie said, "What are deein' there,
My leesom lady?"
"Spinnin' a sark to my young son,"
Said she, said she:

"Weel mat ye bruik it, my leesom lady:"
"Gin I dinna bruik it weel, I'll bruik it ill,"
Said she, said she:
"I sweepit my hoosie, my leesom lady."
"Ye did na sit foul in't then,"
Said she, said she.

The manuscript here wasn't very legible, but I fear that at last the poor polite moosie was eaten up by that hard-hearted cattie.

4.

THE GREY CAT'S KITTLED.

The grey cat's kittled in Charlie's wig,
The grey cat's kittled in Charlie's wig,
There's ane o' them livin' and twa o' them deed;
The grey cat's kittled in Charlie's wig.

5.

SANNY COUTTS' LITTLE DOGGIES.

Sanny Coutts' little doggies, little doggies,
little doggies,
Sanny Coutts' little doggies
Licket Sanny's mou', man.
Sanny ran aboot the stack,
An' a' 's doggies at 's back,
An' ilka doggie gied a bark,
An' Sanny ran awa, man.

6.

MY DOGGIE DAINTY, O'.

O' he's my bonnie doggie Dainty, O',
An' O' he's my bonnie doggie Dainty, O',
I widna gie my bonnie doggie for a wedder hoggie,
Altho' I had my choice o' twenty, O'.

7.

AUCHINHIEVE'S DOGGIES.

Auchinhieve's doggies were a' here yestreen—
There was Boosie and Bapsy,
Merryman, and Mapsy,
Rosy and Rinwell, Auchinhieve, and Honey Bell,
Were a' here yestreen.

8.

SIMON BRODIE.

Simon Brodie he had a coo—
The coo she was lost an' he cu'd na find her ;
If he had done what a man could do
The coo had come hame wi' her tail behind her.
Puir auld Simon Brodie,
Puir wee doited body ;
I will awa' to the North Countrie
An' see my ain auld Simon Brodie.

Simon Brodie he had a wife,
An' wow but she was wondrous bonny ;

He's taen the dishclout oot o' the bink
An' prinned it till her cocker-nonny.
Puir auld Simon Brodie,
Puir auld wee doited body ;
I will awa' to the North Countrie
An' see my ain auld Simon Brodie.

9.

DOLLIE BAIRDIE.

Dolly Bairdie haed a coo',
Black an' white about the mou',
Wasna' she a dainty coo—
Dance, Dolly Bairdie.

Dolly Bairdie haed a cat,
She could tak' baith mouse and rat,
Wasna' she a dainty cat—
Dance, Dolly Bairdie.

Dolly Bairdie haed a hen,
She could lay baith but an' ben,
Wasna' she a dainty hen—
Dance, Dolly Bairdie.

Dolly Bairdie haed a cock,
An' he could spin at the hard or rock,
Wasna' he a dainty cock—
Dance, Dolly Bairdie.

Dolly Bairdie had a wife,
She could use baith fork an' knife,
Wasna' she a dainty wife—
Dance, Dolly Bairdie.

10.

HAWKIE.

Ca Hawkie, drive Hawkie,
Ca Hawkie throu' the water.
Hawkie is a good milk coo,
Bit Hawkie winna wade the water
I'll cast aff my hose an' sheen,
An' I'll drive Hawkie throu' the water.

11.

I HAED A HENNY.

I haed a henny, my henny pleased me,
I fed my henny ahin' the tree,
An' aye my henny cried jim-a-jick, jim-a-jick,
An' my cockie cried leely gowkoo ;
Leese me on your bonny black mou',
John Gowrie's cock was never like you.

I haed a chucky, my chucky pleased me,
I fed my chucky ahin' the tree,
An' aye my chucky cried pee-ack, pee-ack,
An' my henny cried jim-a-jick, jim-a-jick,
An' my cockie cried leely gowkoo ;
Leese me on your bonny black mou',
John Gowrie's cock was never like you.

I haed a deuky, my deuky pleased me,
I fed my deuky ahin' the tree,
An' aye my deuky cried quaak-quaak,

An' my chucky cried pee-ack, pee-ack,
An' my henny cried jim-a-jick, jim-a-jick,
An' my cockie cried leely gowkoo ;
Leese me on your bonny black mou',
John Gowrie's cock was never like you.

12.

THE COCK AN' THE HEN.

The cock an' the hen,
The deer in the den,
Shall drink in the clearest fountain,
The venison rare
Shall be my love's fare,
And I'll follow him over the mountain.

13.

THE HIRDY DIRDY.

The Hirdy Dirdy cam' hame fae the hill hungry, hungry: "Faar's my growl?" said the Hirdy Dirdy. "It's sittin' there i' the bowl, the black chucken and the grey hae been peckin' amon't a' the day." He up wi' his club an' gied it o' the lug. "Peak, peak," cried the chucken ; "Will-a-wins," cried the hen. "Little maetter," said the cock, "ye su'd hae gaen to yer bed fan' I bade you."

14.

THE TOD AN'S WIFE.

The Tod an's wife
They made a strife ;
They never eatit saut
To their meat in their life,
Nor yet eatit it wi' a fork or a knife,
But rieve it fae the bone O'.
The Tod's wife she was brocht to bed,
An' saeven bra' young tods she haed,
An' she wished for a bit o' gaeslin' meat
Afore her lyin' doun O'.

The Tod said—

"As I cam bye yon barn yards,
Geese an' gaeslins saw I there,
An' the fattest o' them 'll creesh (grease) my beard,
Afore I gang fae the toun O';"
An' the grey geese she got word o' that,
An' in ahin' the stack she crap,
Saying—"wae's my heart that I'm sae fat,
For the Tod's aboot the toun O'."
An' the auld Tod he got word o' that,
An' in ahin' the stack he crap,
An' up wi' the grey geese upon his back.
An' wished he war fae the toun O'.

15.

Fan I gaed to the Tod's house,
There I got milk and bread,

An' I was bidden chap taes, chap taes,
Or ever I cam' speed, chap taes, chap taes,
Or ever I cam speed.

16.

The geese chaps at the yett ;
The gaaner he cries, fa'? (who)
" Ou, sir, it's Maister Middleton,
The laird o' Gowrie Ha'.

17.

The Gowk-coo's a bonny bird,
He sings when he flies,
He brings us good tidings,
And he tells us no lies ;
He sucks little birds' eggs
To make his voice clear,
And he never cries gowk-coo
Till the summer draws near.

18.

WASH WEEL THE FRESH FISH.

Wash weel the fresh fish, wash weel the fresh fish,
Wash weel the fresh fish,
An' skim weel the bree,
For there's mony a foul-fitted thing, mony a foul-fitted thing,
Mony a foul fitted thing i' the saut sea.

I'll catch the white fish, I'll catch the white fish,
I'll catch the white fish,
To please my lassie's ee ;
But the bonnie black-backit fish,
The bonnie black-backit fish,
The bonnie black-backit fish,
Has aye the sweetest bree.

19.

Johnny come lend me your fiddle
If ever you mean to thrive ;
O' no, I'll not lend my fiddle to ony man alive.

Johnny shall have a blue bonnet,
An' Johnny shall go to the fair,
An' Johnny shall have a new ribbon,
To tie up his bonny brown hair.

An' why should not I love Johnny ?
An' why should not Johnny love me ?
An' why should not I love Johnny,
As weel as another bo-dye ?

An' here is a leg for a stockin'.
An' here is a foot for a shoe,
An' here is a kiss for his daddy,
An' two for his mammy, I trow.

20.

O GIN JOCKY WAD BUT STEAL ME.

O gin Jocky wad but steal me,
I wad shortly burn my wheely ;

My minnie she's a cankert fairy,
Wadna let me court wi' Hairy.
Now he's aff an' left me lonely,
An' I hae but Jocky only ;
O gin Jocky wad but steal me
I wad shortly burn my wheely.

21.

Dance to your daeddy my bonnie leddy,
Dance to your daeddy my bonnie lamb,
An' ye'll get a fishy in a little dishy,
An' a furly-giggy, an' a souple Tam.

Dance to your daeddy my bonnie leddy,
Dance to your daeddy my bonnie lamb,
An' ye'll get a slicy o' a dishy nicey,
An' a sweety wiggy, an' a mutton ham.

The above little ditty appeared in one of Galt's novels, but I heard the first verse from my mother long before Galt's novels were published, and the second verse from a gentleman of my acquaintance, likewise before the publication of these novels.

22.

I MAUN HAE MY GOON MADE.

I maun hae my goon made,
Goon made, goon made,
I maun hae my goon made
Like ony ligger lady—

Side an' wide aboot the tail,
Side an' wide aboot the tail,
Side an' wide aboot the tail,
An' jimp for my body.

23.

MEGGIE BRIDIE.

Bonny Meggie, braw Meggie,
Bonny Meggie Bridie, O',
When she got on her new goon
She lookit like a leddie, O';
But when she put it aff again
She wis bit Meggie Bridie, O;
When she put on her damask goon
She lookit like a leddie, O';
But when she took it aff again
She wis but Meggie Bridie, O'.

24.

A BRAW NEW GOON.

It's I hae gotten a braw new goon,
The colour o' the moudiewort;
I bade the tailyer mak' it weel,
An' pit linin' i' the body o't,
I' the body o't, i' the body o't,
I bade the tailyer mak' it weel,
An' pit linin' i' the body o't.

25.

OUR MAID MARY.

O' wat ye what our maid Mary's gotten,
O' wat ye what our maid Mary's gotten—
A braw new goon, wi' the tail o't rotten,
An' that's what our maid Mary's gotten.

26.

Gae tell the Torry Lassikies,
Gae tell the Torry Lassikies,
Gae tell the Torry Lassikies
To wive langer hose,
For there's ower mony muffitees,
There's ower mony muffitees,
There's ower mony muffitees
Woven to our boys.

27.

LITTLE MUNCY GRAY.

Little Muncy Gray sittin' on a creepy,
Half an ell o' grey
Wad mak' him coat and breeky.

28.

Willie, Willie Waadie that rides wi' the king,
Naething in his pocket but ae gowd ring ;
Whiles gowd, whiles brass, whiles never a thing
Willie, Willie Waddy that rides wi' the king.

29.

O', he's my bonnie Johnny Collie,
That lives into Cairn-o-holly,
For you I wad drink eely dolly
Until the day I dee.

30.

ANDREW CARR.

Hey, my Andrew, Andrew,
How, my Andrew Carr,
Hey, my Andrew, Andrew,
How, my Andrew Carr,

It's what care I for better, an' what care I for waur,
An' what care I for better, gin I get Andrew Carr.

31.

The bonny muir hen has feather's enoo',
The bonny muir hen has feathers enoo',
There's some o' them black, an' there's some
o' them blue;
The bonny muir hen has feathers enoo'

32.

There was Tam o' my back, and Tam i' my lap
An' Tam o' my knee, an' Tam sookin' me;
Tam fiddler, Tam Piper, Tam wi' the gleyt ee;
Tam here, Tam there, Tam, Tam o' the lea.

33.

There was a hielandman axed at me,
What, grows there berries into the sea ?
As I could answer him again,
What, grows there skate upon Cloch-na-ben ?

34.

The souter gaed the soo a kiss,
Tantiriorum.
Fie, ye rogue, it's for my birss,
Taran-antiorum.

The few following little tales or rhymes used to be repeated or sung, with appropriate action, by mothers to their little children while they had them on their knees :—

35.

THE DOGGIES GANGIN' TO THE MILL.

The doggies gang to the mill
This way an' that way, an' this way an' that way,
An' tak' a lick oot o' this wife's puock,
An' a lick oot o' that wife's puock,
An' a lick o' the mutur, an' a laep o' the dam,
An' they ran awa' loupy for spang, an' loupy for spang,
An' ower the mill dam, an' ower the mill dam.

As they told it they plaited the children's little limbs backwards and forwards all the while, to represent the actions of the doggies.

36.

JOHN PROTT.

John Prott (Pratt) an's man,
Doon the gaet they cam',
They bocht, they sauld,
Mony a penny doon tauld.
Hey, quo' Prott, and how, quo' Prott,
Haud ye by this, and haud ye by that.
John Prott, follow (fellow) fine, can ye shoe this horse o' mine?
Yes, gudeman, an' that I can, just as weel as ony man.
Shod him siccar, shod him sair, a great burden for to bear;
Ten peats wantin' aucht, wisna' that an awfu' draught.
Pit a bit upon the tae to gar the beastie clim' the brae;
Pit a bit upon the heel to gar the beastie pace weel;
There's a nail, and there's a prod,
An' noo, gudeman, your beastie's shod.

In repeating "John Prott" the mother used to pat the soles of the bare feet of her child, time about, while warming them at the fire before she put the child to bed.

37.

This is the way the ladies ride,
Jimp an' sma', jimp an' sma';
This is the way the gentlemen ride,
Spurs an' a', spurs an' a';

This is the way the cadgers ride,
Creels an' a', creels an' a ;
A little wee cadgerie loupit on ahin' the creels,
An' knit (snap) goes the girdin' raip (rope),
An' up got the cadgerie's heels, heels, heels.

The above was repeated to a child sitting astride on the nurse's knee, who was moved up and down to imitate the motion of a person on horseback. The movement got gradually more violent, till, at the catastrophe, the child's body was suddenly pushed backwards as though it were to fall to the ground.